

A
DISCOURSE
OF THE
Covenants

That God made with Men
before the Law.

Wherein,

The *Covenant of Circumcision* is more largely handled, and the Invalidity of the Plea for Pædobaptism taken from thence discovered.

By NEHEMIAH COXE.

Search the Scriptures, Joh. 5. 39.

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A

DISCOURS

OF

COVERINGS

The Lord I made
before the world

W. B. B. B.

The Government of
ly handled, and the
Plan for Psalms
from the Lord

BY W. B. B. B.

Second Edition, 1822

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at the Angel and Bible in the Postage, 1822.

THE
P R E F A C E
TO THE
R E A D E R.



THE usefulness of all divine Truth revealed in the holy Scriptures, with the great Importance of what particularly concerns those Federal Transactions which are the Subject of the ensuing Treatise, will not leave me without Apology for an Essay towards the Discovery of the mind of God in them.

As for that part of the Discourse (which is most controversial) concerning the Covenant of Circumcision, I
A 3 *have*

The Preface

have been the farther engaged in it, upon occasion of Mr. Whiston's Treatises about Baptism, especially his last, entitled Infant Baptism plainly proved: For, observing the main Hinge of the Controversie about the right Subjects of Baptism, to turn upon Gen. 17. I concluded the only way to clear this great Point, must be to make a diligent search after that Account, which the Scripture gives us of the Nature and Ends of the Covenant there recorded: And tho' I have declined the handling these things in a Polemical way, and therefore have not undertaken to return a particular Answer to every thing that hath been asserted in Opposition to my Sentiments; Yet, I hope, the judicious Reader may observe such a Regard had to what hath been urged against those Principles which I proceed upon, as will excuse me from the Charge of

to the Reader.

of crudely re-asserting those things that have been already answered or refuted, without giving any new Inforcement to them, or endeavouring to remove the Ground and Occasion of those Mistakes which I suppose in others.

To the holy Scriptures I refer my self for the Tryal of what is written, and do sincerely desire that nothing may pass for Truth, but upon their Testimony; And if I sometimes walk in an untroden Path, it is not from any Affectation of Novelty, but in pursuance of that Light which they afford me; And, possibly, seeing those things which at first may seem New, are for the most part deduced from a plain Record of Matters of Fact, they may, upon second Thoughts, gain an assent to their Truth sooner than Opinions arising from more nice Speculation.

That Notion (which is often supposed

in

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in this Discourse) That the Old Covenant and the New do differ in substance, and not in the manner of their Administration only, doth indeed require a more large and particular handling, to free it from those Prejudices and Difficulties that have been cast upon it by many worthy Persons, who are otherwise minded; And accordingly I designed to have given a farther account of it in a Discourse of the Covenant made with Israel in the Wilderness, and the State of the Church under the Law. But when I had finished this, and provided some Materials also for what was to follow, I found my Labour for the clearing and asserting of that Point, happily prevented, by the coming forth of Dr. Owen's 3d Vol. upon the Hebrews, where it is largely discoursed, and the Objections that seem to lie against it, fully answered (especially

to the Reader.

cially in the Exposition of the 8th Chapter) whither I now refer my Reader for Satisfaction about it, which he will there find answerable to what might be expected from so great and learned a Person.

That the Publication of this little Tract, hath been so long delayed, was partly occasioned by those Perplexities which the restless Plots of the Papists, and their bold Attempts to overwhelm us with the worst of Miseries, have caused, which I thought would scarcely give leisure for the Consideration of what might be offered in this kind; and partly by my own Aversion from any thing that looks like the moving of any Controversie with those that love the Lord Jesus, and sincerely espouse the Protestant Interest, tho' differing in Principle and Practice from me in some contraversted Point; there being nothing

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nothing that my Soul more longs for on Earth, than to see an intire and hearty Union of all that fear God; and hold the Head, however differing in their Sentiments about some things of lesser Moment; and together with these things a sense of Insufficiency to perform my undertaking with that Advantage to Truth as is to be desired, had its share: Howbeit, after I had weighed all Circumstances, the Satisfaction I have, that no Man is by me provoked by any undecent Reflections, or any Occasion given to uncharitable and unchristian Contention; with the Hope that what is here offered, may inform some, and give others Occasion of more accurate Thoughts in a farther Disquisition of the Truths pointed at, prevailed with me at length to cast in this my Mite into the Publick Treasury.

This only I shall add, That in the whole

to the Reader.

whole, my Aim hath been to speak the Truth in Love; and to take my Notions from the Scriptures, not grafting any preconcieved Opinions of my own upon them. Where the Evidence of Truth appears, let it not be refused, because offered in a mean Dress, and presented under the disadvantage of a rude and unpolished stile; But consider rather the reason of what is said; and, with the noble Bereans, search the Scriptures, to see whether these things be so or not; and the Lord give you Understanding in all things.

N. C.

**The Reader is desired to correct the following
ERRATA.**

In the marg. Note in P. 18. line 3. read *judicantur*. P. 68.
4. 9 for *if* read *of*. P. 63. l. 2. del. *now*. P. 71. l. 15. read *as*
the *they* *were*. P. 75. marg. Note read *by us*. P. 79. l. 28.
read *promise* *second* *to*. l. 28. del. *as*.

Other literal Escapes and Errors in Punctuation of less
Moment are left to thy Candor to correct in reading.

N. C.



OF Covenant-Relation

TO GOD in General.

CHAPTER I.

A General Introduction to the following Discourse. §. 1. The particular design of this Chapter proposed. A Covenant to be considered either on the part of God, as proposed by him, or as Man enters thereinto. God is first in proposing a Covenant to Men. Covenant-Interest compleated by Restipulation. No Covenant of mutual benefits betwixt God and Men. §. 2. The general notion of a Covenant as proposed by God. This further explained, with some necessary Consequences of it, in seven particulars. §. 3. God hath
B always

always dealt with men about their future state in a way of Covenant. Some Consecratories of it.

§. 4. His Covenant always transacted with some Head, or representative for others. §. 5. Some general Inferences, and Directions for the right understanding of Covenant-Transactions. §. 6.

THE great Interest of Man's present Peace, and eternal Happiness, is most nearly concerned in Religion; and all true Religion, since the fall of Man, must be taught by divine Revelation, which God * by diverse parts, and after a diverse manner hath given out to his Church, causing this Light gradually to encrease, until the whole Mystery of his Grace was perfectly revealed in and by Jesus Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of Wisdom and Knowledg. And

* Heb. I. 1, 2. Πο-
λυμερῶς, Deus non
semel olim omnia,
sed particulatim, de-
inde etiam diversis
modis suis notitiam
ac cultum declara-
vit. per Prophetas,
quod propius dies im-
minabat, eo clario-
rem lucem edentes.
Bez.

that God unto whom all his Works were known from the beginning, hath in all ages disposed and ordered the Revelation of his Will to Men, his Transactions with them, & all the works of his holy Providence towards them, with a * Respect unto

* Deus in omnibus
Actionibus prae se se-
culi, semper ob ocu-
los habebat tempora.
Massia, Grot.

unto

unto the fulness of time, and the gathering of all things unto an Head in Christ Jesus therein: So that in all our search after the mind of God in the holy Scriptures, we are to manage our Enquiries with a respect to Christ. And therefore the best Interpreter of the Old Testament, is the holy Spirit speaking to us in the New; because there we have the clearest Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God shining upon us, in the face of Jesus Christ, by unveiling those counsels of Love and Grace that were hidden from former Ages and Generations. Nevertheless the greater Light of the New Testament doth no way abate the usefulness of the Old; but rather obligeth us the more to an humble and diligent Study thereof; and that (as on many other accounts, so, for this reason also) because the Mystery of the Gospel cannot be thoroughly apprehended by us, without some good understanding of the Oeconomy of the Law, yea, and also of the State of things *before the Law*; the mutual respect and dependence of the Old and New Testament being such, as neither can be understood apart, or without the other, nor an intire *Sysme* of Truth, as it is in Jesus, collected, but from both.

It must be acknowledged therefore to be of great use and concern to us, to be well acquainted with those Transactions of God with Men, and his Dispensations towards them, that are recorded in the sacred History of the first Ages of the World, and the Church of God therein. And

in this Enquiry, I shall at present ingage my self, so far as those times reach that preceded the giving of the Law by *Moses*, and no farther. And in the performance of this (to avoid tediousness in repeating what hath been by others handled at large, and fully cleared) I shall for the most part confine my self to brief Observations upon the Records of these things, as left to us in the holy Scriptures; and more largely insist on such Passages only, as I conceive not to have been so fully spoken to by others, or at least not handled in that Method and Order, as to me seems most suited to the nature of the things treated of, and so most apt to convey a clear notion of them to our Minds.

§. 2. And forasmuch as those Transactions of God with Men, which in this Enquiry we shall meet with, are of a *Federal Nature*, it will be requisite that in the first place, something be spoken of *Covenant-Relation to God in general*.

The original Words whereby a *Covenant, making, striking, or entering into Covenant* are signified, with their various use, and application to particular Cases and Occasions, have been fully explained by many; and therefore passing that, as to our present purpose, it will be enough to mind you,

That a *Covenant* is to be considered, either simply as proposed by God, or as Man enters therein to by *Restipulation*. For,

1. What-

Vid. Godeii de fæderæ, c. 1. & Rhet. in Gen. Exerc. 53.

1. Whatsoever is transacted in a foederal way betwixt God and Men, God hath the first hand in it. As Christ said to his Disciples in another case, that they had not chosen him, but he had chosen them; so may we say, Man hath not at any time entred into Covenant with God, but God hath entred into Covenant with Man; seeing it only belongs to his Sovereign Majesty, and is the fruit of his infinite Goodness to propose, as of his Wisdom to choose and order the Terms of a *Covenant-relation* between himself and his Creatures; And therefore the Covenant that he hath made with Men, is frequently in Scripture said to be the Lord's Covenant, as in *Psal. 25. 14. Isa. 56. 4, 6.* and other places. Howbeit,

2. Covenant-relation to God, and Interest in him, doth not immediately result from the proposal of a Covenant, and Terms of Covenant-relation to Man; but it is by *Restipulation* that he actually enters into Covenant with God, and becomes an interested Party in the Covenant; it is a mutual Consent of the parties in Covenant, that states, and compleats a Covenant-Relation; and this is called an *avouching of the Lord to be their God*; by consent to the Terms of a Covenant proposed to them *Deut. 26. 16, 17, 18. a subscribing with the hand unto the Lord, Isa. 44. 5. and taking hold of his Covenant, Chap. 56. 4, 6.* The formal notion of a *Covenant entred or made*, includes *Mutual Ingagement*. But yet,

3. There can be no Covenant of *mutual benefit*

betwixt God and Men, as there may be betwixt one man and another ; for all Creatures do necessarily depend upon, and have both their Being and Wel-Being from the Bounty of their Creator ; there is nothing that they have not received from him, and therefore the most perfect of them can render nothing to him, but what is due by the Law of their Creation. None can be profitable

*Job 35. 7, 8. Rom.
11. 35, 36.*

to God, tho' he that is righteous, may be so both to himself, and his Neighbour; and therefore none can oblige God, or make him their Debtor, unless he condescend to oblige himself by Covenant or Promise.

§. 3. The general notion of any Covenant of God with Men, considered on the part of God, or as proposed by him, may be thus conceived of, That it is,

* *Est enim Dei
Fœdus nihil aliud
quam divina decla-
ratio de ratione per-
cipiendi amoris Dei,
et uniuscuiusque ac commu-
nionis ipsius potiendi.
Cocceius de Fœd.*

* " A declaration of his So-
" veraign Pleasure concerning
" the Benefits he will bestow
" on them, the Communion
" they shall have with him,
" and the way and means
" whereby this shall be enjoyed
" by them.

And for the better understanding of what I intend by this general Description, I shall briefly propose some particulars, that are either included in it, or are the immediate and necessary consequents of it, viz.

1. It

1. It implies a free and Sovereign Act of the Divine Will, exerted in condescending Love and Goodness; it is not from any necessity of Nature, that God enters into Covenant with Men, but of his own good Pleasure. Such a priviledg, and nearness to God, as is included in Covenant-Interest, cannot immediately result from the relation which they have to God as Creatures, no not as reasonable Creatures, tho' upright, and in a perfect state; for the Lord owes not unto Man the Good promised in any Covenant he makes with him, antecedently; but his first Right therein, is freely given him by the promise of the Covenant.

2. The notion of a *Covenant* adds assurance to that of a *promise*, as it implies a *special Bond of favour and friendship*, which belongs unto Foederal-Interest and Relation; for a Covenant is the foundation of a special Relation betwixt the parties concerned therein; the kind and benefit of *which Relation* is determined by the Covenant it self, the Nature, Promises, and End thereof.

3. The immediate and direct End therefore, of God's entring into Covenant with Man at any time (so far as concerns Man himself) is *the advancing and bettering of his State*; God did never make a Covenant with Man, wherein his Goodness to him was not abundantly manifest; yea such is his infinite Bounty, that he hath proposed no lower End to his Covenant-Transactions with Men, then the bringing of them into a blessed State in the eternal Fruition of himself; And

therefore, when one Covenant (thro' the weakness of Man in his lapsed State) hath been found weak, and unprofitable, as to this great End of a Covenant, because insufficient to accomplish it; God finds fault, abolisheth it, and introduceth another, wherein full provision is made for the perfect Salvation of those that have interest in it: *Heb. 8. 7, 8.*

4. The kindness, and condescending Love of God in entring into Covenant with Man, doth strengthen that Bond of Love and Obedience to God, that he is under by the Law of his Creation, by adding a new Obligation thereunto; And therefore the Sin of Man in breaking Covenant with God rises higher, and is accompanied with greater aggravations, than the bare Transgression of a Law, if no such Covenant-relation had been added thereunto. And therefore,

5. The Revelation of the Counsel of God's Will in a Covenant proposed to Man, is so far from excluding a Restipulation on his part, as that it renders it a necessary duty upon him. It is not in this case as in Federal Transactions betwixt Equals, where one is at liberty to refuse the Covenant offered by the other Party; but the fence of our infinite distance from God as Creatures, and the dependence we necessarily have upon him, and the duty we owe to him by the unalterable Law of our Creation, (as well as our own advantage and profit thereby) obligeth us with holy fear, and thankfulness, to accept both the

Benefits

Benefits he offers to us, and the Terms on which they are offered, in his Covenant; and diligently to perform what we are by him commanded, and directed to, for the Ends proposed therein. But yet,

6. This Restipulation (and consequently, the way, and manner of obtaining, as also the right in which we claim Covenant-Blessings) must of necessity vary, according to the different Nature and Terms of those Covenants that God at any time makes with Men: if the Covenant be of *Works*, the Restipulation must be, by *doing* the things required in it, even by fulfilling its condition in a perfect obedience to the Law of it; and suitable hereunto, the reward is of *Debt* (understand it not of Debt absolutely, but of *Debt by compact*) according the Terms of such a Covenant. But if it be a Covenant of free and sovereign Grace, the Restipulation required, is an *humble receiving*, or *heartly believing* of those gratuitous Promises on which the Covenant is established; and accordingly the *Reward* or Covenant Blessing, is, immediately, and eminently of *Grace*.

7. Therefore the Good and Glory of any Covenant, that God makes with Men, whether it be considered absolutely, or in comparison with another Covenant, is chiefly to be measured by the Promises and Terms thereof; if one Covenant be established upon better Promises (i. e. either promising a more excellent Good, or in a more excellent Way) than another, it is from thence deno-

denominated, and for that reason to be esteemed, a *better Covenant* than the other. *Heb. 8. 6.*

§. 4. And together with these things, it may not be unseasonable in this place, farther to observe,

That the holy and wise God hath always dealt with the Children of Men in a *way of Covenant*; the Display of infinite Goodness hath always accompanied the discovery of his infinite Glory in his dealing with Men; and therefore he hath not acted towards them, to the utmost Right of his Sovereignty and Dominion over them; had he so done, there had never been any *reward of future Blessedness* assigned, and made Due to their Obedience, as by Covenant there hath been; nor had they been brought into any nearer Relation to God, then that which did result from their Creation by him: But the great God hath not so kept his distance from Man, but that he hath condescended to *come to Terms* with him; and as he hath required Obedience in some things beyond the immediate dictates of the Law of Nature, by *positive Institutions*; so he hath been pleased also to oblige himself, beyond the Debt of a Creator, by promise of a bountiful Reward. And hence it follows;

That as all the Worship and Obedience that God hath required of, and accepted from the Children of Men, hath been upon *Covenant-Terms*; so their Ability, or moral capacity, of walking in well

well-pleasing before him, hath been also given to them, or wrought in them, pursuant to the ends of their Covenant-Relations; and therefore must be the inseparable Adjunct (not of the *bare proposal* of a Covenant to them, but) of that Covenant-Interest in which they have been stated. And of this, the consequence is,

1. That persons once fallen under the guilt of *breach of Covenant*, are by their own default *utterly disabled* from yielding any acceptable Obedience to God upon the Terms of that Covenant, which they have violated; and in the Interest of that Covenant-relation which is forfeited and lost by them; they remain under the penal Sanction of the Covenant, but are utterly dispoyled of Strength to answer the Ends of that Covenant, and have wholly lost their Right in the Reward of it.

2. If they be *without Strength*, with respect to the Condition and end of that Covenant, which once they had Interest in, and *Principles suited to*, then are they so *much more*, while they remain in their lapsed state, with respect unto the terms of *another Covenant* more excellent and mysterious, and wholly *supernatural* as to the Doctrine and Terms thereof. And therefore,

3. Spiritual Strength, and Ability to please God, can no way be restored to them, but by a *new Covenant-interest*, and that *new Creation* which is the adjunct thereof.

§. 5. This also is worthy to be noted by us,
That

That those Covenants which God hath made, wherein either Mankind in general, or some select number of Men in particular have been concerned, it hath pleased him first to transact with some *publick Person, Head, or Representative*, for all others that should be concerned in them: Thus it was in the *Covenant of Creation*, which God made with *Adam* in his upright State, and with all Mankind in him; and the same is to be observed in the *Noachical Covenant*; as also in the Covenants made with *Abraham*, considered either as the Father of Believers, or of the *Israelitish Nation*; in the interest of a spiritual Relation to him, Believers claim the Blessings of the Covenant of Grace that was made with him; and in the interest of a natural Relation to him, his offspring according to the flesh did claim the Rights and Priviledges of that Covenant of Peculiarity which was first made with him as the Head of that separate People; but more eminently, the Covenant of Grace is established in Christ as the Head thereof; all its Promises were first given to him; and in him they are all *Yea, and Amen*; It is by Union to him that Believers obtain a new-Covenant-interest, and from him they derive a new *Life, Grace, and Strength*, to answer the Ends of the New-Covenant.

§. 6. Now as it is evident from what hath been already said, that all *federal transactions* of God with Men flow only from his *good pleasure*,
and

and the *counsel of his Will*; so upon that ground it is certainly to be concluded, that our Knowledge and Understanding of them, must wholly depend upon *Divine Revelation*; none can pretend acquaintance with the *Secret of God*, but as he hath pleased to *reveal* it in his Word; this Light must guide all our Inquiries after it; and our sentiments of things of this nature must be strictly governed by *this Rule*; seeing the nature of them is such as transcends the common Principles of Reason or natural Light, inasmuch as they owe their original to the *free acts* of the divine Will and Wisdom, which are unaccountable till revealed by God himself; and therefore it becomes us to captivate all our thoughts of them, to the obedience of Faith, as knowing that *Learning*, and *Strength of parts* (tho' of excellent use in their place) not guided by *Scripture-light* in these Inquiries, can only form an *ingenious error*, and lose a Man in the Labyrinth of his own Imagination, and uncertain guesses; seeing the single advantage of those assistances (in this case trusted to, and stretched beyond their line) can reach no further than to enable him *cum ratione errare*; and so to wander from Truth, in a Path seeming more smooth, tho' no less dangerous, than others light upon.

And therefore in these things lies the Spring of *most Mistakes*, and corruption of Doctrine and Practice in matters of Religion; Men do easily find out, and agree in the true dictates of the Law of Nature, but in things pertaining to the
Cove-

Covenants of God, how various are their Sentiments! Yea many great, learned, and *good Men* have been divided in their Judgments about some things of great importance to the Faith and Edification of the Church, tho' not absolutely necessary to *her Being*; and *some one error* admitted about the nature of God's fœderal transactions with Men, doth strangely perplex the whole Systeme, or Body of Divinity, and intangle our interpretation of innumerable Texts of Scripture; and by this means Jars and Contentions have been perpetuated in the Church, to the great grief and hindrance of all, the offence of the weak, and greater scandal of the blind World; and all this hath been much occasioned thro' the want of a due and humble attention to that Revelation of Truth which God hath given us in the holy Scriptures, and indeavouring to collect the mind of God from thence without *prepossession of Judgment* (which is a greater occasion of these mistakes then Men are generally aware of) and a careful avoiding the *undue mixture* or confusion of things *natural*, with those that are purely of a *fœderal* nature.

Forasmuch then as *the Covenant* of God is his *Secret*, and he only can *make us to know it*; and yet our Faith and Practice, Comfort, and Holyness, is nearly concerned in a good acquaintance with it, we need no other Motive to a diligent and humble search of the Scriptures, for the right informing of our Judgment thereabout; nor no other

other Caution not to attribute overmuch to our own Wisdom or Abilities, but to manage all our Inquiries with *earnest prayer* to God for that holy spirit of Light and Truth, who only can lead us into all this Truth, and bring us to a clear acquaintance with the mind of God concerning it.

Of God's Transactions with Adam.

CHAP. II.

The Importance of this Enquiry, the method proceeded in, stated. §. 1. The original state of man; the Law that he was made under, both moral, and positive; the sanction of this Law, and the Reward proposed to him. §. 2. That he had a promise of Reward farther asserted and proved. §. 3. Some farther remarks upon this Transaction; Reward and Punishment not alike necessary; the sanction of the Law by the Curse most expressly mentioned, and why it was so. §. 4. Adam a publick person, the consequent hereof. §. 5. That Transaction with Adam of a federal nature; proof that it was so. herein consists the Mystery thereof; §. 6. The general nature of this

this Covenant ; Man left to the freedom of his own Will under it; his mutability, the original of Sin. §. 7. The sin of our first Parents; some Remarks thereupon. §. 8. The state and condition of Man fallen, described in several particulars ; the death threatned in the sanction of the Law was eternal death ; two reasons urged for the proof of it ; §. 9. The Mercy of God to fallen Man ; two things premised to the consideration thereof, §. 10. God holds a treaty with man ; the issue of it ; A promise of Redemption implied in the commination of the Serpent ; A restraint and modification of the Curse ensuing thereon ; this the occasion of temporal Death ; the institution of Bloody Sacrifices ; the Covenant of Grace not made with Adam as a publick person ; §. 11. The state and condition of Adam's Posterity after the Fall, described in some particulars ; §. 12.

§. 1. **I**N the former Chapter, I have briefly touched upon some things of a more general nature, which I thought needful to be premised to the handling of those Particulars which are to follow ; and now my work is to consider the first state of Man, an account of which is to be taken from the state of Adam, in whom the world

world of Mankind was Epitomized, and in the Transactions of God with him, the Relation he had to God with the *Event* and *Issue* thereof, we are all most nearly concerned; for the right understanding of these things, is not only necessary in order to, but lies in the very Foundation of all *useful Knowledge* of our selves, and of the mind of God in all Revelations, that he hath in following Ages made of his Will and Counsel to the Children of Men, either before, or in the Law of *Moses*, or by the word of the Gospel. The ignorance of this that was in them, is apparently the reason of the Blindness, and miserable Mistakes of the wisest Heathen Philosophers, in a thousand other things of the greatest Importance; if a Man miss the right account of this, he is certainly bewildred in all after search for that Truth which it most concerns him to know; and therefore it behoves us with all diligence to observe what the Holy Ghost hath left upon Record for our Instruction in this matter: The Discourse of which, may be referred to these three Heads.

1. The Condition of *Adam* before he sinned.
2. His Sin, and the immediate Consequents thereof. And,
3. How God dealt with him in his fallen State: of each I shall discourse but very briefly: And first,

§. 2. Concerning the Condition of Man before his Fall, we may observe these things;

1. That God made him a reasonable Creature, and indued him with *original Righteousness*, which was a Perfection necessary for the enabling of him to answer the End of his Creation; and eminently in this respect, he is said to be created *in the Image of God*, Gen. 1. 26, 27. and to be made *upright*, Eccle. 7. 29, which *Uprightness* or *Rectitude of Nature* did consist in the perfect *Harmony* of his Soul, with that Law of God which he was made under, and subjected to: which was,

1. An *eternal Law*, and *invariable Rule* of Righteousness, whereby those things that are agreeable to the Holiness and Rectitude of the Divine Nature were required; and whatsoever is contrary thereto was prohibited; which Law was to *Adam*, *internal* and *subjective* only, being com-

* *Ipse naturalis est dictamen recte rationis, iudicans actus alios, ex eius convenientia vel inconvenientia cum ipsa natura rationali, inesse moralem turpitudinem, aut necessitatem moralem,*

et considerari ab Austera Natura, ipse Deus, solum altum sui Regis aut Principis. Grot. Thiracata Philosophi representat it, was Nota Artificis operi suo impressa. And of some Dictates of the Law of Nature (as I remember) Cicero saith, that with respect to them, facti non docti, imbuti, non instructi fuerunt.

municated to him with his reasonable Nature * and written in his heart, so as that he needed no external Revelation to perfect his Knowledge of it. And therefore in the History of his Creation there is no other account given of it but

what

what is comprized in this; (I hold you have
 since repeated) that he was made in the Image of
 God, which as the Apostle teacheth us doth con-
 sist in Righteousness and true Holiness, Eph. 4. 24.
 The Sum of this Law was afterwards given in
 ten Words upon Mount Sinai; and yet more
 briefly by Christ, who reduceth it unto two great
 Commands respecting our Duty both to God, and
 our Neighbour, Mat. 22. 37-40. And this as
 a Law and Rule of Righteousness is in its own
 Nature immutable and invariable as is the Nature
 and Will of God himself; whose Holiness is
 stamped thereon, and represented thereby. *John 1.*
 18. He pleased the Sovereign Majesty of Heaven;
 to give this eternal Law a *positive Precept*,
 wherein He charged Man not to eat of the Fruit
 of a Tree in the midst of the Garden of Eden;
 which Tree was called, The Tree of the Knowledge
 of Good and Evil, Gen. 2. 16, 17. chap. 3. 3. The
 eating of this Fruit was not a thing evil in itself;
 but was made so by Divine Prohibition; and
 therefore it was necessary that the Will of God
 concerning this, should be expressly signified and
 declared unto Man, who otherwise by the Light
 of Nature, had been no more directed to abstin-
 ence from the Fruit of this Tree, than of any
 other in the Garden, nor indeed had he been un-
 der any Bond of Duty thereunto. But the Com-
 mand being once given forth, this positive Law
 had its Foundations firmly laid in the Law of
 Nature, it being an *unalterable Dictate* thereof.

“That it is a most righteous and reasonable thing
“that Man should obey God, and that the Will
“of the Creature should ever be subject to the
“Will of the Creator. And therefore the Heart
of an upright Man could not but naturally close
with, and submit to the Will of God by any
means made known unto him; and there can
be no Transgression of a positive Precept, without
the *Violation* of that eternal Law that is written
in his Heart.

Secondly, This Law was guarded by a *Sancti-*
on, in the threatning of Death to the Transgression
thereof, *Gen. 2. 17.* which Commination is de-
livered in Terms denoting the *utmost Misery* that
can befall a reasonable Creature, and the *highest cer-*
tainty of its befalling him in case of his Transgressi-
on; *In the day thou eatest thereof* (saith the Lord) *in-*
dying thou shalt dye. And this Sanction belonged
not only to the positive Precept unto which it
was expressly annexed, but also to the *Law of Na-*
ture, the Demerit of the Transgression of which
Law, is known to man by the same Light as
the Law it self is known to him; and this is
made good by the experience of Mankind even in
their fallen State, who do not only find some re-
maining Notions in themselves of the difference
of Good and Evil, and some sense of their Duty
to embrace the one, and eschew the other, but
also have a *Conscience of Punishment* due to the
Transgression of these Dictates of their Reason:
And these Notions are connatural to them, and
there-

therefore to be observed as well in those that have not, as in those that have the Light of *written Law* to guide them; *Rom. 13. 2.* chap. 2. 15. And if it be thus with fallen Man, then much more, as the Law it self, so also the Sanction thereof was perfectly and distinctly known unto *Adam* in his upright State; whose Conscience was pure, and his Mind irradiated with a clear Light, as being perfectly free from those dark Fumes of sensual Lust wherewith the Reason and Judgment of his lapsed Offspring is darkned and perverted.

Thirdly, *Adam* was not only under a Comination of Death in case of Disobedience, but had also the Promise of an *eternal Reward*, on condition of his perfect Obedience to these Laws; which Condition if he had fulfilled, the Reward had been due to him, by vertue of this *Compact* that it pleased God to condescend unto for the encouraging of Man's Obedience, and the manifestation of his own Bounty and Goodness.

S. 3. Now that such a *Promise of Reward*, was given to *Adam*, and indeed implied in the *Comination* of Death in case of Disobedience, may be concluded;

1. From the *State*, and *Capacity* in which God set him; which was a *state of Tryal* in a way to eternal Happines, under a Law of Works and exercise of Obedience; which we cannot conceive of, but as in order to some Reward and highest

End, proposed to him; and which is so agreeable by himself. It is evident that he had not as in those that have the same. 2. From the natural Inclination of Men to expect the Reward of *flame Bliss* as if for their Obedience to the Law, the God had to stand before him upon Terms of a Covenant of Works, which must necessarily arise from Man's Relation to God in such a Covenant at first, in which the Promise of such a Reward did belong, and the Knowledge of this Covenant-Terms come down to him together with the Law of his Creation.

3. From the Sacramental Use of that Tree in the Midst of the Garden of Eden; which was called the Tree of Life, because instituted of God for a Sign and Fledg of that eternal Life, which Adam should have obtained by his own personal, and perfect Obedience to the Law of God; had he continued therein; and that this Tree was appointed by God unto such an Use, and End is collected; because it was given to him to eat of it.

1. From the Allusion that Christ makes thereunto in the New Testament; *Rev. 22* where he promiseth an *eternal Reward*, to him that overcometh, in those *Parables*; *Rev. 22* *the Tree of Life*, which is in the midst of the *Paradise of God*: The reason of which is taken from God's Appointment of this Tree to be an assurance of eternal Life to Adam upon the Terms and Condition of a Covenant of Works; and the Analogy of that Reward which Christ gives to his faithful

faithful ones upon Terms of another Covenant, which Analogy consists in the general Nature of an eternal Reward promised, tho' there be not an Identity, or perfect Agreement in the Degree, or particular Kind thereof: I will not pretend exactly to determine the Mode or Degree of that Blessedness which was set before Adam by the Covenant made with him, whether it was a Confirmation in his present State (which was very happy) or a Translation to a better, when the Course of his Obedience in this, was run out; however it seems reasonable to conclude that it was in some respects short of that Glory we are called to by Jesus Christ; but they both agree in the notion of an eternal, and in its kind, perfect Happiness; and therefore the one is expressed by those Terms that relate to a former Assurance of the other.

2. From the Method of God's dealing with Adam in reference to this Tree, after he had sinned against him, and the Reason thereof assigned by God himself. *Lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the Tree of Life, and eat, and live for ever.* You may read an account of the whole, Gen. 3. from Verse 22th, to the End. We are not to suppose that Adam could indeed have obtained eternal Life, by eating of the Fruit of that Tree, after he had sinned against God; but the whole Scheme of that Discourse is Ironical; and as I take the foregoing Words * *Behold the Man is become like one of us*, to be an holy upbraiding of the

* En Divinitatem promissam!

Folly of Man in aspiring to such a State, by the Breach of God's Law, upon the Credit of the Devil's Suggestion; so I take these Words also to intimate a *farther Delusion* that fallen Man was in danger of, by entertaining an Opinion (that yain Man is on any pretence ready to nourish in himself) of his being in a Capacity yet to recover his forfeited Happiness *this way*, or by any other *Work of his own*; howbeit they teach us what was the *Use and End* that this Tree was at first designed to, as also that *Adam* was not ignorant thereof, tho' now he was to be taught the utter impossibility of obtaining Life by a broken Covenant, by the guarding, and prohibiting all access to, that Tree, *by the Cherubins flaming Sword, that turned every way to keep the way of the Tree of Life.*

3. This also must not be forgotten, that as *Moses's Law* did some way *include* the Covenant of Creation, and serve for a *Memorial* thereof (on which account all Mankind was concerned in its Curse) it had not only the Sanction of a *Curse* awfully denounced against the Disobedient, but also a Promise of *the Reward of Life* to the Obedient; now as the Law of *Moses* was the same as to the moral Precept, with the Law of Creation, so the Reward in this respect proposed, was not a *new Reward*, but the *same* that by Compact had been due to *Adam*, in case of his perfect Obedience.

§. 4. From what hath been said (*I conceive*) it is manifest, that *Adam* was set in his way but not actually brought to his eternal Rest, in that State wherein he was created; being capable of, and made for, a greater Degree of Happiness: then he immediately enjoyed, which was set before him as the Reward of his Obedience by that Covenant wherein he was to walk with God; and of this *Reward* thus set before him, these things are farther to be observed;

1. That altho' the Law of his Creation was attended both with a promise of Reward, and a threatening of Punishment, yet the *reason of both* is not the same, nor alike necessary; for the Reward is of meer Sovereign Bounty, and Goodness, and therefore might have been either less or more, as it pleased God, or not proposed at all, and yet no Injury done; but the Punishment threatned is a Debt to Justice, and results immediately from the nature of Sin with reference to God, without the Intervention of any Compact; it is due to the Transgression of a Divine Law as such, and therefore still due to every Transgression of it, even by those that are already cut off from hope of Reward by former Breach of the Covenant; and as it may not be more then the Offence deserves without Injury to Man, so neither may it be less, without a Diminution of the Glory of Justice, by the strict Rule of which it is always measured; that Death therefore which was threatned in the Curse, is in a strict and proper Sence

Since the wages of Sin; Rom. 6. 23!

And. In the History of this Transaction, as left upon record by the Holy Ghost for our Instruction, we have a more particular and express Mention made of the Curse threatened, than of the Reward promised, and so a more distinct Notion of that conveyed to our Minds than of this, altho' we have reason to think both were known to Adam with equal clearness; and this may be, because it more concerns us to be thro'ly humbled under a Sense of the present Misery of Mankind in their lapsed State, then curiously to enquire after the particular Mode, or Degree of that Blessedness which was once proposed, but can never be obtained by us in the Interest of that Covenant, which first gave Man a Right thereunto.

§. 5. In this Transaction of God with Adam, he is not to be considered in a private Capacity, or as one concerned for himself alone; but God treated with him as the *common Root* and *Representative* of all Mankind, that were to spring from him according to the ordinary course of Nature; and were then reckoned to be in him both as a natural, and *Federal Root*; and therefore in his standing all Mankind stood, and in his Fall, * they all sinned, and fell in him, for by the Dis-

* *Nos omnes eramus ille unus homo.*

obedience of one many were made Sinners; Rom. 5. And in this respect he is said to be the Type, and Christ

Christ the Antitype, or, the Figure of him that was to come; because as Adam's Sin is imputed to all that were in him, and so the Judgment is come upon all unto Condemnation, that were represented by him; so also the Obedience of Christ is imputed to all that are in him, and the free Gift redounds upon them, unto the Justification of Life, by virtue of their Union to, and Communion with him.

§. 6. From these things it is evident that God dealt with Adam not only upon Terms of a Law, but in a way of Covenant; and that this Transaction with him was of a Federal Nature; and altho it be not in Scripture expressly called a Covenant, yet it hath the express Nature of a Covenant; and there is no reason for Doubt about Terms, where the thing it self, is sufficiently revealed to us; there is no express mention of a Covenant of Grace, before Abraham's time, and yet the thing is certain and clearly revealed in Scripture, that all who were saved before his time, were interested in such a Covenant, and saved only by the Grace thereof. The Evidence of Adam's Covenant-Relation to God, may briefly be summed up thus,

1. It is probable, in that God set him, not only under the necessary Law of his Creation, but added thereunto a positive Law; which we may observe in all his After-dealings with Men to be an adjunct of a Covenant Transaction. But
hen,

2. It is certainly concluded from that Promise of Reward, and the Assurance thereof, that was given to *Adam*, which he could never have obtained, but by God's condescending to deal with him upon Terms of a Covenant,

3. It could only be upon the account of such a Covenant, that his Posterity should be concerned as they were, in his standing, or falling; let the first be denied, and the latter is altogether unaccountable, for had he only been under a Law to God, his Sin had remained upon himself, and could not have redounded upon the whole World of Mankind, as now it doth by a just Imputation, no more then the Sin of any particular Person, can now be imputed to another Man that is not actually guilty thereof, at least the Sins of immediate Parents unto their Children.

And herein lies the *Mystery* of the first Transaction of God with Man, and of his Relation to God thereupon, which did not result immediately from the Law of his Creation, but from the *Disposition of a Covenant* according to the *Free, Sovereign, and wise Counsel of God's Will*; and therefore tho' the *Law of Creation* be easily understood by Men, and there is little Controversie about it amongst those that are not degenerate from all Principles of Reason and Humanity; yet the *Covenant of Creation*, the Interest of *Adam's* Posterity with himself therein, and the Guilt of original Sin redounding upon them thereby, is not owned

by

by the generality of Mankind, nor can be understood but by the Light of Divine Revelation; nor is the Heart of Man humbled unto a due Acknowledgment of it, by a clear and deep Conviction; but by a Work of the Holy Ghost. And while Men will measure this Counsel of God by their own narrow and dark Reason, and refuse to submit their Sentiments thereabout, to the Revelation of his Sovereign Pleasure, his unaccountable Will, and Wisdom, they must necessarily fall into grievous Mistakes, and fill the World with fruitless Contentions thro' their darkening of Counsel, by words without Knowledge.

6. 7. This Covenant that God made with Adam, and all Mankind in him, as to the Terms and Condition of it (we see) was a *Covenant of Works*; with respect to immediate Priviledg and Relation, it was a *Covenant of Friendship*, and with regard to the Reward promised, it was a *Covenant of rich Bounty and Goodness*; but included not, nor intimated the least *lots of pardoning Mercy*; but as while the Law of it was perfectly observed it raised Man within a Degree of the Blessed Angels, so the Breach of that Law inevitably brought him under that Curse which did sink him to the Society of Apostate Devils, and left him under a Misery like to theirs.

2. Under this Covenant Man was left to the *Freedom of his own Will*; It was in his own Power

Power and Choice, either to obey, and be eternally happy, or to sin and so expose himself to eternal Misery; he was not so constrained in Grace, as that he could not live and dye, but he was indowed with that Power, and Rectitude of Nature, as that he might not have sinned, nor ever dyed & tho' he had not a *non posse peccare*, and so a *non posse mori*; yet he had a *posse non peccare*, and so a *posse non mori*; he was a perfect tho' a mirable Creature, and had all possible advantage of moral Satisfaction to make him constant in his Obedience, he could not be without a clear Conviction of the greatest Obligation thereunto, both in point of Duty and Gratitude, towards his Creator, and Covenant-God; he had present Happiness, and future Hope in the way of his Duty, and fair warning of the Misery that sin would bring upon him, in the denouncing of that Curse which was the Sanction of the Law given unto him; and yet when the time of Trial comes, all this prevails not against the Temptation, but his *Misibility* becomes the *Original* of that *Original Sin*, whereby himself, and in him the world of Mankind, were ruined and made miserable.

§. 8. The next thing therefore to be inquired into is, *The Sin of our first Parents, and their State and Condition thereupon.*

As to the first, Their Transgression was actually completed, by eating of the Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, concerning which

the Lord had commanded them that they should not eat thereof; *Gen. 3. 6.* and with respect to this let it be observed,

1. That it was by the Breach of a positive Law that Mankind was lost. This was the Door thro' which Sin, and all the Miseries consequent thereto, invaded; and by their Entrance ruined this lower World.

2. In what Man fell by the Transgression of this Positive Precept, his Breach of Covenant with God was so much the more conspicuous; inasmuch as this Precept belonged not immediately, and necessarily to the Law of his Creation, but was superadded thereto, as a special Term and Condition of his Covenant-Relation.

3. The Breach of this positive Law doth suppose and necessarily infer, a Violation of the eternal Law of his Creation; this Transgression was a total Apostacy from God, and in it all conceivable Wickedness was included; even the lust of the Flesh, the lust of the Eyes, and the pride of Life; *1 John 2. 16.* yea all the Villanies that to this day have been, or ever shall be perpetrated in the World, are the genuine Fruit thereof; and upon a strict search its Aggravations will be found to be unaccountable.

4. The State and Condition of Man thus fallen, is next to be enquired into; and that was most miserable and dreadful; for having after this manner broken Covenant with God, by

a wicked and wilful Transgression of his holy Law,

1. He thereby utterly forfeited and lost all *Covenant-Interest in God*; he could no more claim a Right in, or hope for, that Reward which was promised on Condition of his perfect Obedience to the Law of that Covenant, which God had made with him; but immediately fell under Guilt, being by the Sentence of his own Conscience bound over to punishment, under the just Wrath of the Almighty; and therefore he dreaded nothing more then the Approach of God to him, *Gen. 3. 8, 9, 10.*

2. He did not only forfeit his Right, and present Relation to God by this Sin, but moreover he was thereby rendred *incapable* of true Happiness, inasmuch as he was now apostatized from a Covenant of Friendship, to a State of Enmity against God, and Alienation from him, which is the necessary Adjunct of Wickedness; He fell under the *Dominion* of Sin; and that Image of God wherein he was created, was in a manner wholly defaced; he *sinned and fell short of the Glory of God*; *Rom. 3. 23.* And now instead of that original Righteousness wherein he was at first beautified, there was nothing to be found in him, but abominable Filthiness, and horrid Deformity; his Mind was covered over, yea possessed with hellish Darkness, Hatred of God reigned in his Heart, and his Affections were no longer subject to right Reason; but

but became vile, and rebellious; and in this State it is evident, he must be utterly incapable of Communion with God, and of the Fruition of him, wherein alone the true Happiness of a reasonable Creature doth consist.

3. The Curse of the Law in its utmost Rigour, and prime Intendment, was *immediately* and only due to him; and no less then the utmost Execution thereof was every Moment to be expected by him; and that was *Death*, even the worst of Deaths, *eternal Death*, which is, "An everlasting Punishment of Soul and Body, under the wrathful Vengeance of a provoked Deity.

Now that this was the prime Intendment of the Threatning, might be evinced by many Reasons, but at present I shall content my self with the mention of two only.

1. This Punishment will be inflicted on many of the ungodly Posterity of *Adam* who have been guilty of no other Transgression but that of the Light and Law of Nature; such were those wicked Heathens that *Paul* speaks of *Rom. 1:20.* &c. and Chap. 2. 6; — 16. who, tho' they never had the Law written, or knew of any repeated Promulgation thereof, (and therefore we may conclude them much more unlikely to be acquainted with the new-Covenant and its Terms) yet being a Law to themselves, were for the Transgression of this Law lyable to this Punishment: Now this Punishment must be the Fruit of that Curse which is the Sanction of that Law

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which they were under, and which was transgressed by them, which was the Law of Creation, even the same Law that *Adam* was made under; and if the Law be the same, the same Penalty was incurred by the Transgression thereof; and if they are liable to eternal Death for the Transgression of this Law, there is no rational doubt but *Adam* was so.

2. If the *just Demerit and Wages of Sin* was contained in the threatning (as no doubt it was) it could be no less than *an eternal Punishment* that was threatned; for if that be not the Desert of every Sin, it cannot be due to any Sin; for the Reason why the Punishment of any Sin is *eternal*, is that the Penalty inflicted on the Sinner may be *adequate* to the Offence; the Punishment hath an *Infinity* in its *Eternity*, because the Fault is *infinitely aggravated*, and that can only be in regard of its Object; there is nothing that can be an infinite Aggravation of Sin, but its being committed against a God of infinite Greatness, Glory, and Goodness; and this Aggravation attends every Sin, as it is Sin against God, and tho' other Circumstances may increase the Provocation, and so intend the Degree of the Sinners Pain, yet none but this can reach Infinity: The Punishment therefore due to *Adam* for Sin against God, could be no other or no less then eternal Death, which is that intended in the Sanction of the Law given to him.

Fourthly, The whole Creation of this visible
World

World became lyable to Destruction with fallen Man, as an Inheritance forfeited by his Treason against the Supream Majesty : By the Sin of Man the Frame of Earth, and the Heavens made for his ~~Service and Delight~~, was loosed, and their Foundations so shaken, as would have issued in an utter Ruin, had not Christ interposed and *upheld the Pillars thereof*; Psal. 75. 3. with Heb. 1. 3. and if the Curse had been immediately executed in its Rigor, with these Desolations following thereupon, there had been an *Hell ready prepared* for Man; for suppose, I pray you, all the Lights of Heaven to be put out, the whole Order, Symmetry, and Beauty of the Creation to be destroyed, and all reduced to a *Chaos* of Confusion, and horrid Darkness about Man, and the burning Wrath of God kindled upon him, now cast into the Jaws of eternal Despair, and tormented by a Worm that never dyes, (think I say of this) and you will hardly be able to conceive of a state more dreadful and dismal than this, ~~that~~ Man stood at the very Brink of.

Fifthly, In this Condition Man was altogether *helpless and without Strength*, being utterly disabled to stand before God upon Terms of a Covenant of Works, and as incapable to bring himself upon other Terms with God; for he was not able to move one step towards a Reconciliation with God, or the ransoming of himself out of these Miseries : The Door of Repentance was not opened to him by the Covenant of Creation,

or if it had, there was in him now neither Power, nor Will to enter in thereat; He was utterly disabled from obeying God acceptably upon any Terms, until made a new Creature: And therefore it was impossible, not only that *this Covenant* now broken should be renewed with him, or any of his Posterity, for the same Ends, and in the same manner as it was at first made with upright Man; but moreover that ever any *Covenant* should be *immediately stricken* with him or them, wherein fallen Man should have been the first, and immediate Covenanter with God for himself, as *Adam* was in his State of Integrity.

§. 10. Thus miserable (yea more than we have expressed, or can express) was the State of fallen Man; Let us now see how the boundless Mercy of God was revealed unto him, when he was thus lost, and miserably ruined by his own Sin. And for the better understanding of what is to follow, I shall premise two things, which are necessary to be kept in our Eye.

1. That the infinitely Wise and Gracious God, who from Eternity foresaw the Fall of Man, had also from Eternity a gracious Purpose in himself, according to the Counsel of his own Will, to redeem and save a Remnant of lost Mankind from their lapsed and fallen State, and by his All-powerful Grace thro' the Merits of Christ,
to

2 *Tim.* 1. 9, 10.

Tit. 1. 1, 2.

to recover them from Misery to the Inheritance of a Kingdom and Glory far greater than that set before *Adam* in his Integrity ; And these eternal Counsels that were hid with himself, were transacted in a way of *Covenant between the Father and the Son*, even in a Covenant of Redemption now revealed in the Scriptures of Truth : And to this Covenant belong all the Promises of the Father to the Mediator, and the resipulatory Engagements of the Redeemer, about the Salvation of Sinners and the way and method of its Accomplishment : And with respect to these Counsels the Son of God is said to be the Father's Delights, and himself also to have his Delights in the habitable World, when the Head of the Dust thereof was formed ; *Prov. 8. 22, — 31.* In which Context the mutual Acquiescence both of the Father and the Son, in this admirable Contrivance of infinite Grace and Wisdom, is not obscurely set forth.

2. In pursuance of this Covenant of Redemption, and the Suretyship of Christ taken therein, upon the Fall of Man, the Government of the World was actually put into the hands of the Son of God, the designed Mediator, who interposed himself for the Prevention of its present and utter Ruin : And by him were all future Transactions managed for the Good of Man, and all Discoveries of Grace and Mercy were made to the Children of Men in him, and by him : And all things in Heaven and Earth were brought

into an order subservient to the Ends of the *new Creation*, and the Redemption of lost Man to be accomplished in the fulness of time by the Son of God incarnate: Fallen Man could have no more to do with God, nor God with him in a way of Kindness, but in a Mediator.

§. 11. And from this Design of Love and Mercy it was, that when the Lord God came unto fallen Man in the Garden, in the cool of the Day, and found him filled with Horror and Shame in the Conscience of his own Guilt, he did not execute the Rigor of the Law upon him, but held a Treaty with him, which issued in a Discovery of Grace, whereby a Door of Hope was opened to him, in the laying of a *new Foundation* for his acceptance with God, and walking unto well pleasing before him. For,

1. In the Sentence passed upon the Serpent (which principally concerned the Devil, whose Instrument he had been in tempting Man, and who probably was made to abide in his Possession of the Serpent, till he had received this Doom) *Gen. 3. 5.* there was couched a blessed Promise of Redemption and Salvation unto Man, which was to be wrought out by the Son of God made of a Woman, and so *her Seed*; which Salvation thus promised, Man was to receive by Faith, and to hope in it; for in this *implied Promise* was laid the first Foundation of the Church after the Fall of Man, which was to be raised up out of the Ruines

Ruines of the Devil's Kingdom by the Destruction of his Work by Jesus Christ; 1 *Joh.* 3. 8.

2. In this Commination of the Serpent there is not only implied a Promise of raising up a Saviour of the Seed of the Woman, and sending him into the World for the breaking of the Serpents Head, that is, the perfect Conquest of Satan, and the utter ruining of his Kingdom; but also of propagating and preserving a Church in the World that should be Heirs of that Salvation, and should maintain a spiritual War with Satan and his Kingdom, which on their part should end in perfect Conquest and Victory; The God of Peace bruising Satan under their Feet, while he is nibbling at their Heel, and making them to be more than Conquerors thro' him that loved them; for the Seed of the Woman is to be understood collectively of Christ and his members (as the Seed of the Serpent includes all wicked Men) tho' it hath a principal respect to Christ personal, who alone hath obtained the Victory over the infernal Power, and destroyed the Works of the Devil; But altho' this was done by himself alone, yet was it not for himself only, but for his Body the Church, of which every true Believer is a Member, and shall certainly obtain Victory thro' the Faith of his Name; And against this Church the Gates of Hell can never prevail, but a Church there ever shall be in the World, so long as the World continues, and ever was since the first Promise, tho' maligned and persecuted by the Devil and wicked Men, as

early appears in that Instance of *Cain and Abel*; *Gen. 4.* compared with *1 Job. 3. 12.* And something of this nature is intimated in the Name of *Seth*, and the Reason given by *Eve* of her imposing that Name: *Gen. 4. 25.*

3. Hereupon there was a *present Restraint and Modification of the Curse* in the Sentence pronounced upon *Adam* and *Eve* *Gen. 3. 16,—19.* whereby altho' they and their Offspring were necessarily subjected to many Evils and Miseries while they lived, and Dissolution by a temporal Death at last, yet they were not immediately laid under a Sentence of *eternal Death* which was the Punishment they had deserved: And concerning this Sentence we may farther observe,

1. That the Promise of breaking the Serpents Head which was revealed to our first Parents, did not give them a Deliverance from *all Misery*, but only an Exemption from *eternal Death*; But notwithstanding this Promise, and all that Christ hath now done for the full Accomplishment thereof, it is the Will of God that all Men, even Believers as well as others, shall in this World be exercised with Miseries, and remain subject to temporal Death, or Dissolution of the Body into Dust.

2. The *Corruptibility* of Man, all the Miseries he is subject to while he lives, and temporal Death at last, are the Fruits of Sin, and of the Curse due to it, as they are natural Evils, or Punishments; but yet they are not the Fruit or Result of the *Curse only*, nor the full Wages of Sin; As they

they are *evil* they flow from the Curse, but as *temporal only*, the Evil of them is *limited*, and thus *modified* by Mercy, or compassionate Goodness at least: The Position of temporal Death, concludes indeed that Sin is in the World; but this Limitation of Death doth also prove, that there is Mercy reserved for some, and that such as obtain not Mercy must be brought to an after reckoning, inasmuch as the Fruit of their Doings hath not fully been repaid to them in this World. And hence,

3. There are none of these Evils but are capable of a Change, as to their penal Nature, together with the Change of that Man's State upon whom they come; for tho' they fall as so many Drops of Wrath that bode a dreadful Storm coming upon the wicked, yet are they * all sanctified unto a Believer, and turned into real Blessings; which change the utmost Execution of the Curse is not capable of, for eternal Punishment can never be turned into a Blessing upon any.

Yea supposing (as there is Reason to do) that God did

not only promise a Redeemer to *Adam* before he pronounced this Sentence, but also gave him Faith in the Promise, it came immediately upon him as a fatherly Chastisement, and not as a Fruit of unpacified Anger.

* *De primâ igitur Corporis Morte, alicui potest quod bonum bona sit, malis mala, secunda vero sine dubio sicut malorum bonorum est, ita nulli bona.* Aug. De Civit. Dei Lib. 13. Cap. 2.

It is also true on the other side, that the Godness and Forbearance of God is, thro' the Wickedness of Man, turned into a *Judgment* upon the Ungodly and Impenitent, who abuse the day of his Patience unto the *treasuring up of Wrath against the day of Wrath, and Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God*: Rom. 2. 5. So that both temporal Mercies and temporal Evils are wholly subservient to the Design of God's Glory in the future and eternal State of Man; and we may conclude there had been no such thing as *temporal Death*, if there had not been *a day of Patience*.

4. It is more than probable that at the same time, or immediately after, God did institute those bloody Sacrifices, that were offered unto him from thenceforth, and accepted by him when offered in Faith, for the further Instruction of Man in the general Notion of the way of his Redemption by the promised Seed, and for the Help and Confirmation of his Faith in the Promise: Yea even the Coats of Skins which the Lord made, and wherewith he cloathed *Adam* and *Eve*, then confounded with the shame of their own Nakedness, seem to be designed of God not only for a natural, but also a *mystical Use*, were for their Instruction concerning that imputed Righteousness wherein they must now stand before him, and without which they could find no acceptance with him; Especially if these Coats were made of the Skins of those Beasts that *Adam* was then directed to offer in Sacrifice to God (as some

con-

conjecture they were) we can hardly imagine less to be intended thereby; for no doubt with the Institution of Sacrifices, something of the *Use and End of them* was revealed unto *Adam*.

5. This also must be noted, That altho' the Covenant of Grace was thus far revealed unto *Adam* as we have heard; yet we see in all this, there was no formal and exprefs Covenant-Transaction with him, much less was the Covenant of Grace established with him as a *publick Person* or Representative in any kind; but as he obtained Interest for himself alone, in the Grace of God thus revealed, *by his own Faith*, so must those of his Posterity that are saved thereby: And therefore altho' the Corruption of fallen *Adam*, and the Guilt of his Fall, be from him derived to all his Offspring, because they were in him as a publick Person and foederal Root when he fell; yet can they not derive from him any Interest in his *renewed State*, or in the Grace or Holiness thereof; seeing with respect thereunto God dealt with him only as a *private Person*; and the Good of the Promise now given out, was no more *intrusted* with him, then with his Posterity, or any of them in particular.

§. 12. The State and Condition that the World of *Adam's* Posterity are now in, is as followeth.

1. They are all born in original Sin, in the Image of the first *Adam* fallen, and so *under a broken*

broken Covenant, being by Nature Children of Wrath, unholy, and without Strength.

2. Yet are they necessarily under the Obligation of a Law, to obey, worship, and serve their Creator, tho' they have no *Covenant-Interest* in him; for it is impossible, and implies a Contradiction that reasonable Creatures should be brought forth into the World, and not be subject to the Law of their Creator, or that eternal Death should not be due to the Breach of that Law by them; The Law of Creation binds, when the Covenant of Creation is broken; tho' the Transgression of Man hath forfeited his Interest in the one, yet it cannot dissolve the Obligation of the other. But yet,

3. The World is set under a *general Reprieve*, and the full Execution of the deserved Curse is delayed until the day of Judgment; until which time the Children of Men are under a Dispensation of Goodness, and sparing Mercy, and so in a remote Capacity or Possibility of obtaining Salvation by Christ, where it pleaseth God to send the Gospel, the Dispensation of which is made effectual for the Salvation of *all the Elect*, who are thereby gathered into the Kingdom of Christ.

4. The Lord Christ hath undertaken in the close of his Mediatorial Kingdom, when all his Sheep are brought into his Fold, for whose sake alone the day of his Patience is lengthened out to the World, to raise all Mankind again in an incorruptible State, prepared for that eternal Duration

ration unto which they were designed in their first Creation ; And then will he glorifie all those with himself for whom he hath satisfied the Justice of God, born the Curse of the Law, and wrought out everlasting Righteousness, who have been also called by his Grace to a Participation of these Benefits thro' Faith ; and others he will deliver up by a righteous Sentence, unto the full Execution of that Curse upon them in its utmost Rigor, which till then, for the Ends aforesaid, was suspended.

Of God's Covenant with Noah.

CHAP. III.

The Children of God stated in a new Relation, and their Obedience upon a new Foundation from the first Promise. §. 1. The Word of God the Rule of their Faith and Obedience ; how revealed to them. §. 2. Enoch's Translation ; the Instruction and Benefit the whole Church had thereby : His Prophecy ; how written in the Old Testament. §. 3. The ordinary Propagation of the

the Church in those times : Mixt Marriages one cause of the general Defection of Mankind : Noah finds Grace in the Sight of God. §. 4. The Ark its typical Respect ; the general nature of such a Type illustrated by conference of some other like extraordinary Works of Providence : The form of the Ark, its mystical Use : how Baptism answers to the Ark : Noah not altogether ignorant of the mystical Signification of the Ark : How he became Heir of the Righteousness of Faith by building it. §. 5. The Covenant of God with Noah ; the establishing thereof at his entring into the Ark ; the Benefit of the Church thereby. §. 6. The farther management of God's fæderal Transaction with Noah, when he came out of the Ark ; the Promises obtained in the Interest of his Sacrifice ; what signified thereby : The reason of his Name : the particular Benefits of this Covenant : the spiritual Extent thereof. §. 7. The curse of Cham opens the way to Shem's Blessing : Circumcision a warning to Israel not to imitate Canaans Wickedness : Special regard to the Messiah in Shem's Blessing : This the cause of Japhet's Blessing also ; The extent thereof.

of. §. 8. *The building of Babel, and confusion of Tongues.* §. 9. *The Evils involved in this confusion of Language : how removed by the gift of Tongues at Jerusalem : The days of Man shortned.* §. 10.

§. 1. **T**HE first Dawning of the blessed Light of God's Grace unto poor Sinners being broken up in that Promise intimated *Gen. 3. 15.* the Redeemed of the Lord were from that time brought into a *new-Relation* to God in and by Christ the promised Seed, thro' Faith in him as revealed in that Promise; and hereupon their Obedience, and religious Service, was stated, and accepted of by God upon a *new Foundation*, viz. that of pardoning Mercy, and Forgiveness thro' the Redeemer, *Psal. 130. 4.* They were no longer upon Terms of personal, and perfect Obedience, or *doing of a Law*; but upon Terms of Faith, or *believing a gratuitous Promise*; which wholly changed the order of their Acceptation with God: For by the Covenant of Creation, the *Work* of Obedience was to maintain the Relation, and secure the Acceptance of the Person with God; but by the Covenant of Grace and Redemption, the *Relation and previous Acceptance of the Person in Christ*, was the reason of the good Acceptance of all their sincere, tho' imperfect Obedience, which did now spring from Faith: And hence it is said *Heb. 11. 4. God had respect to Abel and his Offering*

fering; first to the Person, and then to his Work; And this order, and way of Salvation, as to the general Nature thereof, ever was, and must be, the same and invariable in all Ages, and under all different Dispensations of God towards his Church.

§. 2. And as holy Men then lived by Faith, so consequently they had the Object of Faith with them, viz. *The Revelation of God's Counsel by his Word*; Tho' the Word was not written till Moses's time, yet was the Church never without God's Oracles; which in those days were made known to it, by those ways and means, that the infinite Wisdom, and Goodness of God made choice of; This we have seen in the first Promise, and in the Institution of Sacrifices, which could not have been offered in Faith, as *Abel's* was, if God had not commanded and appointed them; yea it appears also that God had given them some particular Directions what Beasts they might offer in Sacrifice, and what not; for in *Noah's* time the distinction of Beasts *clean and unclean*, is mentioned as a thing well known before. See *Gen. 7. 2, 3. chap. 8. 20.* Unto this we may add that (at least diverse of) the Names of *Seth's* Line were imposed by a Spirit of Prophecy; *Enoch* was a Prophet; and *Noah* a Preacher of Righteousness; all which do infer a Revelation of the Mind of God, and of his Counsels then made unto the Church, *distinct* from the Light, and

Law of Nature, and transcending all the Dictates thereof; altho' it must be granted, This Light did not shine upon them with the same Clearness, as it did upon after Ages.

§. 3. Moreover, The extraordinary Dispensation of God's Providence towards *Enoch*, who by *Faith walked with God*, and then was translated to the heavenly Inheritance without being made subject to the common Lot of Mankind in Dissolution by temporal Death, was not only a singular favour to himself, but also an eminent Discovery to the rest of the Believers of that Age, that the right of Adoption, and claim of an *Inheritance in Light* by Faith, was restored to them in the promised Seed; and therefore did greatly tend to encourage their Faith and Hope, in the Expectation of a glorious State for Soul and Body, to be enjoyed in a blessed Immortality, and eternal Life hereafter; an Earnest of which they had, in the present Injoyment of one Member of that Body to which they were all united. Conf. *Gen. 4. 24. Heb. 11. 5.*

And the very time wherein this was done, doth cast some farther Light upon the mystical Import thereof: *Enoch* was the seventh from *Adam*; and this *Septenary* Number is famous in Scripture, for its mystical Signification of that perfect Rest or *Sabbatism* that Christ should bring his Church unto: And therefore by *Matthew*, the Genealogy of Christ is counted by *septenary Generations*: Again,

The Translation of *Enoch* happened soon after the Death of *Adam* (the first whose *natural Death* is mentioned in Scripture) *Enoch* in the seventh Generation was translated, that he should not see Death ; As they had seen the Fruit of the Curse exemplified in *Adam's* Death ; so they saw that Life which the Promise gives exemplified in *Enoch's* Translation ; who before he was translated *walked with God*, or, as the Apostle gives it, *had this Testimony, That he pleased God* ; and indeed the Hebrew Phrase used *Gen. 5. 22.* doth not only signify Integrity, and eminent Holiness, in a private Capacity, but also (as the learned *Ainsworth* notes upon the place) is often used for a *pleasing Administration of Office before God*, in which respect he was a special Figure of Christ ; and his Translation, of Christ's entring into Heaven, as a Forerunner for us.

Three hundred Years the Church had enjoyed his Ministry ; and seven Patriarchs were left alive as Witnesses of his Translation ; so that the whole number of the Sons of God had the Benefit and Comfort of Instruction thereby. He prophesied of the Destruction of wicked Men, and summed up his Prophecy in the Name he gave to his Son *Methuselah*, which may be interpreted, *They die by a Dart* : or *He dyeth, and then is the Dart* ; (i. e. the Dart of Divine Vengeance in Punishing the ungodly) or, *he dyeth and then it is sent* : This was almost 1000 years before the Flood ; but was exactly fulfilled in the issue ; For *Methuselah* dyed

dyed but about the space of one Month before the Flood came. This Prophecy is more fully set down by *Jude v. 15.* (which may be taken as a divine Paraphrase upon this Prophetick Name; like *Daniel's* Interpretation of the Writing upon the Wall) and applyed analogically to the Sinners of his time: for as this first Judgment, was a Type of future Judgments upon wicked Men, especially of the Destruction of the Jewish State by the Fire of God's Wrath, for their rejecting of Christ; and each of these was a *Preludium* of the general Judgment of the World, so the threatening of this first Judgment to the ungodly then living, was a denouncing of Judgment against all ungodly Sinners, in future times also.

§. 4. In these Ages of the Church it was generally propagated in that Line, thro' which the Blood of the promised Seed did run; Yet do we not find any such Partition-Wall set up between one Family and another, but any that would might freely associate themselves, and joyn with the true Worshippers of God;

* nay it is possible that even some of the Line and Race of Cursed *Cain* might do so; as on the other hand, it is more then probable that others of the Children of *Adam*, besides *Cain*, did revolt with him from all true Religion and Holiness, and joyned Issue

* *Potuit fieri ut quidam privati Homines ex Generatione Cain, Instinctu divino, se ad Adam converterent, & salvati essent.* Luther in Gen.

in an open Contempt of God, and Rebellion against him. However the Nature and Necessity of the thing in it self, in reference to religious Worship, and that Obedience that was due to God therein, did oblige his Servants to keep themselves distinct and separate from the rest of the World: And whilst they did so, the general Defection of Mankind was prevented: But towards the Period of the old World, all things declined and grew worse, and worse; *Gen. 6. 5, 12, 13.* The Violence and Corruption of Mankind abounded; and even the Sons of God were taken with the bait of sensual Delights: And those who had formerly kept up a pure and distinct Communion for the solemn worshipping of God by *calling upon his Name*, and therefore had also his Name *called upon them*, *Gen. 4. ult.* being denominated *the Sons of God*; did now lose the sense of Religion, and brake the Bounds of their just Separation, and mingled themselves with *the Daughters of Men*, *Gen. 6. 2, 4.* These were the Women of *Cain's Offspring*, or of Confederacy with his Seed, by whose Beauty they were entangled, while they regarded more the gratifying of their Lust, than the true Ends of Marriage; and being thus entangled were also drawn in a Partnership with them in their Abominations; Insomuch that when the time of the Flood came, the pure Worship of God was maintained in the Family of *Noah* only, who *found Grace in the sight of God*; *Gen. 6. 8, 9, 10, 11.* and was preserved in the Ark; that

that by him and his Sons the desolate Earth might be again replenisht with Inhabitants, after the *Foundation of the Wicked had been destroyed with a Flood*: Job 22. 16.

§. 5. Now in the dealings of God with Noah there are some things call for our diligent Attention, as carrying on to a farther degree of Light, the Discovery of Grace and Redemption by Christ; and so the farther Establishment of the Church in Expectation thereof. For,

The *Ark* which Noah being warned of God, built by his special Direction, for the saving of himself, and his House, which were *eight Souls*, 1 Pet. 3. 20. did not only afford him and them a temporal Deliverance from the Deluge of Waters, by which God in his Wrath then swept away a disobedient World; but was moreover useful by its *typical Respect* for their farther Instruction about the Redemption of Man, from the Floods of divine Vengeance to be hereafter poured out in eternal Wrath upon the World of Unbelievers. For this is to be observed concerning the State of the Church before Christ came in the Flesh; That as the Gospel was preached unto them by Types and dark Shadows, so this kind of Instruction was afforded them, not only by the *stated Ordinances* of Ceremonious Worship, but also by many *extraordinary Works of Providence*, which were so ordered by Divine Wisdom, as that they might bear a typical Respect unto, and be an apt Repre-

sentation of, spiritual things: This may be observed in many Instances in the History of *Abraham*, and of his offspring the Children of *Israel*: On this account the Manna they did eat in the Wilderness is called *spiritual Meat*, and the Water of the Rock which they drank, *spiritual Drink*; and *the Rock Christ*: 1 Cor. 10. 3, 4. and yet we read of no special Ordination, or Appointment of these things unto such an End, but what they had from *the Order and Voice* of Providence, together with the peculiar Circumstances of the People concerned in them. And under this Consideration doth *Noah's Ark* come, which either was a Type of Christ, (as the Ark in the Jewish Sanctuary) or of the Church considered as guarded with his Salvation; which in the Issue will come near to the same thing.

And this Type is rendered the more lively by the *Form of Structure* which God commanded; and also the unwonted Use of one Term in the Direction given for the securing of their Preservation who were to enter into the Ark.

1. The *Form* in which the Ark was built, in the Proportion of its Dimensions comes nearest to that of the Body of a Man; for it was in length 300 Cubits, in breadth 50, and in height 30: So that in Figure it was shaped like a *Coffin*; and there was a Resemblance of Burial in the entering thereinto, and of a Resurrection in coming out of it; In which respect the Apostle *Peter* makes Baptism to be the Antitype to the Ark, 1 Eph. 3.

19, 20.

19, 20. And thus was the Ark an extraordinary Sacrament, or Prefiguration of the Churches Redemption and Salvation, by the Death and Resurrection of Christ; and of her Union, and Communion with him that dyed and rose again, so as to enjoy all the Benefits of his Death and Resurrection.

2. In the Directions given for the building of the Ark, Noah is commanded to *pitch it with Pitch both within and without*, Gen. 6. 14. the Words in the Hebrew are *Caphartà Baccophèr*: The first sense of the Verb [כָּפַר] is to cover; and thence by a Metaphor it signifies to expiate, or make Atonement; because as things covered are hid from Sight, so Sin expiated, is blotted out, and no more remembered against the Sinner: And the Noun viz: *Cophèr* is never used in the like sense in all the Bible, for the Hebrews have other Words that properly signify such kind of Stuff as was now to be made use of; see *Exod. 2. 3.* but in the Law it is often used for the *Covering of*, or *Propitiation for Sin*: So that these Terms seem to be especially adapted by the holy Ghost, unto the typical respect of the Ark, which was to prefigure the Salvation of the Church thro' the Expiation of Sin, and Atonement made by the Death of Christ; in the Merit of whose Blood is her only Defence against the swelling Waters of Divine Wrath, and the Curse of the Law, under which the whole World of Unbelievers must inevitably perish.

Now tho' we have no reason to think that these things could be then apprehended so distinctly and clearly, as we now see them by the Light of the New Testament; yet have we good ground to believe that some *general Knowledge* of them was conveyed to the Minds of the Faithful, in the time of this *Type*, and by *means thereof*: And this will inform us how *Noah became an Heir of the Righteousness of Faith* by building the Ark, and entering thereinto: *Heb. 11. 7.* seeing there was not only a Proof of his Obedience herein, whereby the Truth of his Faith was manifested, but moreover his Faith did reach, and in some Degree apprehend, the Mystical use of the *Ark* which he was building; and while his hands were busied in the external Work thereof, and his Life secured by his abode in it, his Faith was exercised about that spiritual and eternal Salvation, that was shadowed and typically represented by it.

§. 6. Upon the entrance of *Noah* into the Ark, and also at his coming out thence, we find mention made of God's *establishing his Covenant with him*: see *Gen. 6. 18.* & chap. *9. 11.* And this is the first Place and Occasion of the *explicite mention* of a *Covenant* in the Scriptures; and therefore we are the more obliged to a serious inquiry after the true Nature, and import of this Covenant; some Observations upon it we shall collect, according as things are presented in the order of their Narration by *Moses*; only let this be premised;

That

That tho' God's establishing of a Covenant with *Noah*, be mentioned at two distant times, in the Texts before referr'd to, yet they are not two different Covenants that are so mentioned, but in substance one and the same Covenant, the Benefits whereof are first more generally, and afterwards more particularly express.

In *Gen. 6. 18.* God thus speaks unto *Noah*; "*But with thee will I establish my Covenant, and thou shalt come into the Ark, &c.*" God's making of a Covenant, is the *Establishment* thereof, because his Promise is a full, and sufficient Assurance, that he will perform to the end, what is engaged for therein: The Benefit immediately promised, is, the Preservation of *Noah*, and all that were with him in the Ark; and the Resignation required of him, was, A believing Resignation of himself to God, in an obedient use of those Means of safety which he had ordained.

This at first view seems to import no more than an outward and temporal Favour; but if diligently looked into, we shall discern a great deal more in it; for,

1. In this Benefit of *Noah's* Covenant there was not only a *temporal* Salvation secured to him, and his House, but moreover his *eternal Salvation*, yea, the Salvation of the *whole Church* was included therein, and did wholly depend thereupon; seeing, *the promised Seed* which should break the Serpent's Head was not yet brought forth; and therefore if all Mankind had been now destroyed, tha

that *first and great Promise* (which was a Revelation of the Sum of the Covenant of Redemption) had failed, and so the whole Covenant unto which it did belong, had been *evacuated*, and made of none effect: And with respect to this also, as well as the Certainty of it in it self, the Promise here given to *Noah* in a federal way, is aptly said to be *an establishing of God's Covenant with Noah*, seeing this Covenant was made with him *pursuant* of that gracious Design of Man's Redemption before revealed, which as it was never suspended upon the *Worthiness* of Man, so God by Covenant assures *Noah*, its Accomplishment should never be prevented by his *Wickedness*.

2. Add to this the typical Respect of the *Ark*, and you will discern that under this Covenant was implied, and darkly shadowed, the Covenant of eternal Salvation by Christ; even as the Promise of the heavenly Inheritance unto Believers, was afterwards couched in the Promise of *Canaan* to *Abraham* and his Seed.

§. 7. What past after *Noah* was come out of the Ark, you have recorded in *Gen. 8.* from v. 20, to the end of the Chapter, and in *Chap. 9.* In which History you may observe;

1. That before any farther Transaction of God with *Noah*, there was a *Sacrifice* offered unto the Lord by him, in which the Lord *smelled a sweet Savour*, or, a *savour of Rest*, *Gen. 8. 21.* This Phrase of *smelling a sweet Savour*; signifies the Acceptance

tance of his Offering; and this *Savour* did arise from the typical respect of this Offering to the Sacrifice of Christ (*Confer Eph. 5. 2.*) and the Faith of him that sacrificed; which was thro' it directed to the same Object: And this is to inform us, That all which follows, was transacted in the
 * Interest of this Sacrifice, and is some way to be referred to the ends thereof. From this Passage you may look back to *Gen. 5. 29.* and you will find the reason of *Lamech's* giving the name of
 * *Noah* to his Son explained thereby.

* Christ's Mediation and Sacrifice is the cause of God's Forbearance towards the World

the reason of *Lamech's*

* *And he called his Name Noah, saying, This shall comfort us, &c.*

2. The Blessings of *Noah's* Covenant are first conceived in a gracious Purpose of God's Heart; *And the Lord said in his Heart, I will not again curse, &c.* and are afterwards put into the Promises of the Covenant wherein God ingathereth himself to bestow them; *chap. 9. 8, 9, &c.* And this is reckoned equivalent to an Oath, *Isa. 54. 9. I have sworn that the Waters of Noah should no more go over the Earth.*

3. The particular Benefits and Blessings given to Mankind by this Covenant, were, 1. Fruitfulness for the replenishing of the Earth. 2. Dominion over the Creatures, and the free use of them for Food. 3. Assurance that the Judgment which they had now escaped should not be repeated;

peated; notwithstanding that after-Generations were like to prove as wicked as those that had gone before them, seeing the same Root and Spring of Corruption remained in them, *Gen.* 8. 21. And the *Rainbow* was appointed to be the *visible Sign* and *Token* of this Covenant: *Gen.* 9. 12 — 17.

These things I shall content my self to have thus briefly pointed at; and farther we have to Note,

1. That the Dispensation of Goodness, and Forbearance which the World was set under by the first Promise, was now ratified by a solemn Covenant; wherein also was ensured the Successive Generation of Mankind for the Production of

* *Viz.* The *Messiah*, and his Members.

the promised Seed, both as * *personally, and collectively considered*: And this Assurance raised the Faith of the Church one Degree higher than it had before attained to.

2. This Covenant had also its Mystical Use to the Faithful, as shadowing the Covenant of Grace by Christ; and the Ratification thereof in the Blood of his Sacrifice, by which we are saved from the Curse, and restored to a sanctified Right in Creature-Comforts, and the Hope of eternal Life: And the *Sovereignty* of God's Goodness, with the *Absoluteness* of his Promise in this Covenant, are instanced as a singular Encouragement to the Faith of the Church in reference to the Promise of that Grace that reigns in the New Cove-

Covenant: *Isa. 54. 9.* And the Token of this Covenant, is made the Emblem of the Stedfastness, and eternal Memorial of the other * *Rev. 4. 3.* so that in the typical respect of this Covenant, the Light of divine Grace, and Mercy, did dawn upon the Church with some more Clearness then formerly.

* *The Rainbow about the Throne,* notes God's regard to his Covenant in the Government of the World; All the Administration of Providence is bounded by his Faithfulness.

3. This Covenant is said to be made with *Noah*, and his Sons, and *their Seed after them*, and that for *perpetual Generations*; the Terms are parallel with those we meet with in the 17th Chapter in the Covenant made with *Abraham* for *his Seed in their Generations*: And yet here two things are evident;

1. That remote Generations to the end of the World, are as much concerned in this Covenant as their immediate Offspring with whom it was first made, and have equal Claim to the Blessings of it with them, without any consideration had of their immediate Parents. And

2. That altho' the Grace of the New-Covenant was *mystically held forth* in this Covenant with *Noah*, which was thus stricken with him for *all his Posterity*, yet were not the Grace and Blessings thereof by this means *intailed upon all Mankind*; * They have all, indeed, an interest in that Co-

* The same may be said of the *Promises*.

ses of typical Blessings to Abraham's carnal Seed, and their Interest in them.

venant

venant that signified, and some ways included spiritual Blessings, but those Blessings appertain not to all that have the Signs of them, but remain the peculiar Right of those that do by Faith receive them, *Who are born not of Bloods, nor of the Will of the Flesh, nor of the Will of Man, but of God.* Joh. 1. 13.

§. 8. In the following Part of this History Gen. 9. 25, &c. we may observe,

1. That the Curse of *Cham* upon his Son *Canaan*, prepared the way to the Blessing of *Shem* in his Posterity by *Abraham*; for by the Execution of this Curse were the *Canaanites* afterwards disinherited, and *Israel* planted in their room. And in this prophetick Curse on *Canaan*, and the Blessing on *Shem* you may read, what is after noted by *Moses*, *Deut.* 32. 8. It is also worthy of our Notice; That the Seat of *Israel's* Covenant by virtue of which they inherited the Land of *Canaan*, kept alive the Remembrance of *Cham's* Wickedness, and was a perpetual warning to them, not to degenerate into his Steps: He was condemned to servitude for looking upon the Nakedness of his Father, and they were circumcised in the foreskin of their Flesh.

2. In the Blessing of *Shem*, special Regard is had to the *Messiah*, whose bringing forth into the World, was now limited to the Line of *Shem*; and therefore in his Blessing is the Spring of *Isaiah's* Blessing also. *Shem* is the first of whom it

it is exprefly faid, that *the Lord was his God*: And by *the Lord God of Shem* *Chrift who is now over all*, God bleffed for ever, is intended; whose Name is here celebrated by *Noah*, as the only Hope and Salvation of the Church.

3. The Bleffing of *Japhet* in the Interest of *Shem's* Bleffing, doth not only fignifie his *personal* Interest in the *Meffiah* who was to come of *Shem*, but alfo the calling of the *Gentiles* of his *Posterity*, to be joynt Heirs with the *Jews* in the Bleffings of the *New-Covenant*; yea his dwelling in the *Tents of Shem*, doth intimate moreover the *Succession* of the *Gentile Church* unto the *Church of the Jews*, who were to be difinherited of all *Covenant-Interest* for their rejecting of the *Meffiah*: In that *Passage*, *God shall*

* פח

* *perswade Japhet*, there is an Allufion to his Name; and the calling of the *Gentile Church* is prophesied of in like terms, *Hof. 2. 14, 15.*

§. 9. Some time after thefe things, viz. about the fourth Generation, we find that according to the Bleffing of God upon *Noah* and his Sons *Gen. 9. 1.* there was a very great Increase of Men in the World; and as they increased, they evidently drew upon themfelves the fame Charge that was laid upon the *Old World*; viz. That the *Imagination of their Heart was evil from their Youth*; For in the days of * *Peleg*

* *Gen. 10. 25.*

spiracy,

spiracy, and Rebellion against God, managed by the Children of Men *at Babel*; in pursuance of which they began to build a Tower there: *Gen. 11. 1—9.* And it is very probable *Nimrod* that mighty Hunter was one chief Doer in the Business: (for, *A Defection from the true Religion, and Tyrannous Oppression, usually go hand in hand*) But this their rebellious Enterprize was interrupted

* This gave the Name to the place *Babel* signifying *Confusion*.

by the * *Confusion of Languages* that God brought upon them; And hereupon the Hebrew Tongue which before was universal, remained in its Purity

only, with the Family of *Heber* (from whom it also had its particular Denomination) and such other of the Patriarchs and holy Men then living as had not joyned themselves with these Workers of Iniquity in their cursed Design; And on this occasion *Heber* hath a special Honour put upon him, as you may collect from *Gen. 10. 21.* where *Shem* is in a peculiar manner said to be *the Father of all the Children of Heber.* And *Abraham* with his Posterity the Heirs of *Shem's* Blessing, are from him denominated *Hebrews.*

§. 10. Now by this Confusion of Languages the Children of Men fell under a *greater Evil*, than possibly at the first thought we may be aware of; for it did not only frustrate their present Design, and also render the means of their civil Converse difficult for the future, and the Attainment of all

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Knowledg in things natural, full of Labour and Travel; but, which is far more,

1. It was virtually a kind of *Excommunication* from the Church then in being, with whom the *Hebrew Tongue* remained, that was from this time unintelligible to the greatest part of the World besides; And,

2. In the after Dispensation of God towards the *Hebrews*, this Diversity of their Language from that of the rest of the World, was as the Addition of a *natural Fortification* to that *Wall of Separation*, whereby the Nations were excluded from the Privileges of the Church, and left destitute of that Blessing, (which of all other was the greatest *Israel* had, *Rom. 3. 1, 2.*) of the *Oracles of God*, which were committed to them in the *Hebrew Tongue*: And therefore for many Ages they remained *Strangers to the Covenant of Promise*, *Eph. 2. 12.* living in the darkest Cloud of Ignorance and Idolatry, and so *without Hope, and without God in the World.* And this dismal Effect of the present Judgment, remained upon them generally, until the *times of Restitution and Refreshing*, even until the *last Days*; wherein God would persuade *Japhet*; and bring him into the Tents of *Shem*: And then a Door was opened for the breaking up of Light to the Gentiles, by the *Gift of Tongues* at *Jerusalem*, whereby the Apostles and Prophets of the New-Testament were enabled to preach the Gospel to all Nations in their own Tongue; and thus the *Salvation of God in Zion* became a
Light

Light to the Gentiles, whose Darkneſs was originally brought upon them by the Confuſion of Tongues at Babel.

3. Neither did the Judgment of God upon this Evil Generation ſtop here, for their Days were alſo ſhortned, and cut off in Anger for their Sin, and that to *the half* of them: for you may obſerve in the Genealogy, *Gen. 11th*, that as none which were born after the Flood, attained to the Years of thoſe that lived before it, ſo moſt manifeſtly the ordinary Age of Man was again ſhortened from the time of this Deſection at *Babel*; inſomuch that none of the Generations after *Heber*, attained to more than about *half* the number of his Years.

CHAP.

Of the Covenant of Grace, as revealed to Abraham.

CHAP. IV.

God puts a special Honour upon Abraham by his Covenant-Transactions with him. §. 1. Abraham's Descent, and Contemporaries: his seeming Incapacity for that Covenant-Relation which God brought him into. §. 2. Abraham to be considered in a double capacity; the Covenant not made with him as an ordinary believing Parent: The Method of the following Discourse proposed. §. 3. The Covenant of Grace revealed to Abraham: Gal. 3. v. 6, 7, 8, 9, & 16, 17. proposed. §. 4. The time of this Covenant-Transaction exactly noted: some Inferences from thence. §. 5. The Sum of all spiritual Blessings included in it: Abraham made the Father of the Faithful by it. §. 6. This Covenant confirmed of God in Christ: Gal. 3. 16, 17. farther opened; why Abraham and David so particularly named in the Genealogy of Christ. §. 7. Abraham a Root of Covenant-Blessings, and common Parent to Believers:

lievers: why Paradise called Abraham's Bosom, §. 8. An eternal Settlement of the way of Salvation by Faith in Christ, in this Covenant. §. 9. The Promise of this Covenant given to Abraham twenty five years before the Covenant of Circumcision: no outward Sign added, nor Ordinances of Worship peculiar to it, till Christ's time: the Seed, as well as the Blessing, promised; their Interest in the promised Blessing compleat and full: the Reason of this; and a mistake removed: the Claim of Believers in the Interest of Abraham's Seed, and not as Coordinate with him. §. 10.

§. I. **T**HE next signal Advance that was made of the Discovery of God's Grace to Men, was in Abraham's time, and by the Federal Transactions of God with him, whereby he was brought into such a Relation to God, and the whole Church, as was in some respects peculiar to himself, and never was the Lot of any other of the Children of Men either before or since his time; in respect of which Abraham may be considered as a Type of Christ, who is eminently the Head and Prince of the new Covenant; And because of that special Grace and Favour that the Lord bestowed upon him in his Transactions with him, is he styled *The Friend of God*: And the Cove-

Covenant is said to be *Mercy to Abraham, and Truth to Jacob*; *Mic. 7. ult.* intimating the *beginning* of it to be with *Abraham* which was of meer Grace and Mercy, tho' when once made with him, the *Truth and Faithfulness* of God was engaged to make it good to the *succeeding Heirs* thereof: not but that the Covenant of Grace as made with *Abraham* was the same for Substance, that had been more darkly revealed in the Ages before, but it pleased God to transact it with him as he had not done with any before him. It may be noted also that *Abraham* is the first Man in the World unto whom God is said to have *appeared or been seen*, *Act. 7. 2.* with *Gen. 12.*

§. 2. This *Abraham* was of the Posterity of *Shem*, descended from him in the *Tenth Generation*, and chosen of God from amongst all his numerous Offspring to be in an especial manner *the Heir of his Blessing*: *Gen. 11.* Yet are we not to imagine that *Abraham* and his Family were the *only People* that God had in the World in his Days; for altho' there was then a very great Defection of the World from God and his true Worship, yet was it not *universal* as in *Noah's* time; but there were many alive that did truly fear God, and were accepted with him, besides *Abraham* and those immediately depending on him; for even *Shem* lived till *Abraham* was 150 years old; and *Arphaxad* lived till he was 88, which was 13 years after that Covenant was confirmed with him,

mentioned *Gen. 12.* *Salah* lived until *Abraham* was 118 years of Age, which was about 19 years after the Covenant of Circumcision was given to him: And *Heber* lived after his Death, even until *Jacob* was about 19 years old (for he was the longest Liver of all that were born after the Flood) And there is no doubt but these *Patriarchs* with their Houses, and others joyning with them, and under their Conduct, did worship and serve the true God; yet it pleased the Lord to single out *Abraham*, call him to his Foot, and make him an *Head* of all future Covenants with Men; And this, notwithstanding such a Bar lay in his way at the time of his calling, as to his entering into any such Relation, as was impossible to have been removed, but by Omnipotent Grace and Power; And that both upon a *Moral and Physical Account.*

1. Upon a *Moral Account*: *Abraham* was not a Person eminent for Holiness and Religion; when God called him to inherit *Shem's* Blessing, he was not better or more deserving then any of the rest of his Posterity, but was swimming down the Stream of a wicked World, being degenerated from the Religion and Piety of his *Ancestors*, unto false Worship and Idolatry; *Josh. 24. 2, 3.* And therefore it is not without reason that the Prophet *Ezekiel*, chap. 16. 3. upbraids the People of *Israel* with this, that *their Father was an Amorite, and their Mother an Hittite*, not properly but metaphorically so called, because
even

even they had been involved in the Guilt of *like Apostacy* from God as these Nations, before the Lord graciously called them out of it.

2. Upon a *natural Account*; For *Sarai* the Wife of *Abraham* was barren, and noted to be so before God called him, *Gen. 11. 30.* And yet the Blessing of *Shem* must have been lost, the hope of the Church perished, and all Covenant-Transactions with *Abraham* proved of *none Effect*, if he had not had *Seed*; forasmuch as by virtue of God's Covenant to be established with him, the *Messiah* (as concerning the *Flesh*) was to come of him; And yet all this was no Impediment, or Obstruction in his way, *who quickeneth the dead, and calleth the things that are not as tho' that were.* *Rom. 4.*

§. 3. There is one thing more to be premitted to the Consideration of God's Covenant-Transactions with *Abraham* in particular, which we have most clearly stated in the New Testament, *viz.*

That with respect to them *Abraham* is to be considered in a double Capacity, both as the *Father* of all true *Believers*, and as the *Father* and Root of the *Israelitish Nation*, and for both these *Seeds* God did enter into Covenant with him; howbeit these *Seeds* being formally distinguished the one from the other, their Covenant-Interest must of necessity be *diverse*, and fall under a distinct Consideration; and the Blessings appropriate

appropriate to either, must be conveyed in a way agreeable to their peculiar and respective Covenant-Interest; And these things may not be confounded without a manifest Hazard of the most important Articles in the Christian Religion; And yet such is the *mutual respect* of all God's Covenant-Transactions with *Abraham*, and such was to be his Dispensation towards the Church for some Ages following, as did require a *present Intermixture* of the Promises, and an involving of spiritual Blessings in the shade of temporal, and of a spiritual Seed in a natural. This I suppose is more evident than to admit a Denial; and other Relation of *Abraham* in the Covenants made with him the Scripture speaks not of; neither can we prove thereby, That any of the Covenants given to him, were transacted with him simply under the Notion, or in the Relation of; *an ordinary believing Parent, or Head of a particular Household.*

And therefore for the better understanding of these things, it is necessary that with due Attention both to the *History of the Old Testament*, & the *Light of the New*, we humbly enquire concerning,

1. The Covenant of Grace as made with *Abraham*.

2. The Covenant made with him for his natural Offspring; And

3. Their mutual Respect, and Dependence one upon the other.

§. 4. To begin with the first; That God did reveal

reveal the Covenant of Grace to *Abraham*, as also the general nature of that Covenant, and the Seed concerned in it, we have plainly declared in that Account which the Holy Ghost gives of it, in *Gal. 3. 6, 7, 8, 9, & 16, 17.* Verses; which I shall here transcribe at large;

Vers. 6. Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for Righteousness.

7. Know ye therefore that they which are of Faith the same are the Children of Abraham.

8. And the Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Heathen thro' Faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham (saying) In thee shall all Nations be blessed.

9. So then they which be of Faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham.

16. Now to Abraham and his Seed were the Promises made: he saith not, And to Seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy Seed, which is Christ.

17. And this I say, that the Covenant that was confirm'd before of God in Christ, the Law which was four hundred and thirty years, after cannot disannul, that it should make the Promise of none effect.

These Words contain the whole of what I intend in this Discourse, the Sum of which, as to my present Purpose, I shall briefly collect in some Observations upon them;

§. 5. First, That the Gospel was preached to Abraham, and the Covenant of Grace revealed to him,

him, we have asserted in such full Terms in this Context as none can rationally doubt thereof; and moreover in ver. 17. we have the Time of God's establishing this Covenant with him exactly noted: It was (saith the Text) 430 years before the giving of the Law; Gal. 3. 17. (viz. on Mount Sinai) Now the Law was given in a very little time after the Children of Israel came out of Egypt; And from the giving of the first Promise to Abraham, which we have recorded Gen. 12. 2, 3. unto that very Night in which the Children of Israel were brought out of their Egyptian Bondage, is the Computation of these Years made, as will be evident to him that shall diligently compare the Chronology of those times with the express Testimony of Moses, Exod. 12. 41. And it came to pass at the end of the 430 years, even the self same day it came to pass that all the Hosts of the Lord went out from the Land of Egypt. From the time of the first Promise to the end of Israel's sojourning in Egypt was 430 years, tho' their Abode in Egypt was not near so long. And from hence we collect,

1. That in the Transaction of God with Abraham, recorded Gen. 12. he did solemnly confirm his Covenant with him (altho' Moses makes not express mention of the Term *Covenant* until another occasion be offered Gen. 15. 18.) For the Promise there mentioned, the Apostle asserts to be the Covenant confirmed of God in Christ unto Abraham.

2. The

2. The Mercy of *Israel's* Redemption out of *Egypt* was in some respect to be referred to this Covenant as the Spring thereof (tho' it was not immediately and in its own nature a New Covenant-Blessing to all that did partake in it) And all the dealings of God with them as a select and peculiar People in Covenant with himself, were in *Subserviency* to the great Ends of *this Covenant with Abraham*; and therefore none of them may be interpreted to the Prejudice or *disannulling* of those Promises in which the Gospel was preached unto *Abraham*.

3. By the Computation of *Moses*; *Exod. 12.* it appears, That the Promise we are speaking of was given to *Abraham* on the 15th day of the Month *Abib* (the first Month according to the religious Account of the Jews) on which day *Israel* a Typical Church, obtained a Typical Redemption, in the Interest of a Typical Passover; And on that same day Christ our true Passover was sacrificed for us upon the Cross, obtained eternal Redemption, and by confirming the Covenant of Grace with his own Blood, passed all the Promises thereof into * an unalterable Testament.

* The Covenant of Grace is to be considered by us a *Testamentary* Covenant. *Copf. Heb. 7. 22.* with *Chap. 9. 16.*

§. 6. Secondly, The *Sum* and Substance of all spiritual and eternal Blessings was included in the Covenant and Promise given unto *Abraham*
Gen.

Gen. 12. In these words: *I will bless thee, and thou shalt be a Blessing*; The Grace and Blessings of the New-Covenant were given and ensured unto *Abraham* for *himself*; and moreover this *Honour* was conferred on him, That he should be an *Head* of Covenant-Blessings, as the *Father* of all true *Believers*; No less is intended in those words, *thou shalt be a Blessing*; They suppose indeed that *He* should be *blessed*, but the Promise terminates not in *himself*, but also conveys *Blessedness* to many others thro' a Relation to him as *his Children*; which is yet more fully exprest in that which follows; *In thee shall all Nations be blessed*; This general Promise intends not, that every individual Person in every Nation should at any time be blessed in *Abraham*; but that his Blessing should not be confined to any one Nation excluding others, and that *all in every Nation* that were blessed, should be so by virtue of the Covenant now made with *Abraham*, and in a Relation to him as their *Father*; This was the Gospel preached unto *Abraham*; and a Promise of the *Justification of the Heathen thro' Faith*: Gal. 3. 8. and in the Interest of this Blessing of *Abraham* they receive the Promise of the Spirit as being *his Seed* ver. 14. And this Promise, of a believing Seed which should with himself inherit the Blessings of the Covenant of Grace, was farther confirmed unto *Abraham* a considerable time after this; Gen. 15. compared with Rom. 4. 3, 18.

§. 7. Thirdly; This Covenant was made with *Abraham* in and thro' *Jesus Christ*; It is not *Abraham* but *Christ* that is the first Head thereof; in and by him all the Promises of it are ratified, as he was the *Surety of the Covenant*: Heb. 7. 22. and in him they are all *Yea and Amen*, 2. Cor. 1. From whom all the Grace of the Covenant is derived upon poor Sinners thro' *Faith* in his Name. This the Apostle asserts most clearly, Gal. 3. 17. and argues it from the Form of the Promises as made unto *Abraham* ver. 16. *Unto Abraham and his Seed were the Promises made; he saith not unto Seeds, as of many; but as of one; and to thy Seed, which is Christ.*

The Scope of the Apostle's Discourse will teach us that those Promises are meant which relate to the Justification and Salvation of poor Sinners; even such as include that Grace by which the Gentiles are called to inherit eternal Life; some do principally refer this to Gen. 17. 7. and it will readily be granted that some of those Promises that ultimately respect the *spiritual Seed* and *spiritual Blessings*, are sometimes given to *Abraham* under the Covert of those Terms that have an immediate respect unto his *natural Seed* and *temporal Blessings* as made Types of the other; and when they are so, the Promise still runs to his Seed; in the singular Number; which the holy Ghost may here teach us to be on set purpose to gather up our Thoughts to *Christ* alone, as the *Spring and Root of Abraham's Blessing*, when we consider the mysti-
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cal import of such Promises. But this being allowed, That the Apostle hath the form of that Promise in his Eye, we cannot from thence conclude that the Promise is made to *Abraham's Seed* both natural and mystical in one and the same Tenour; but only thus much will fairly follow upon it, That the Apostle argues from the carnal Seed as typical, to the spiritual Seed as typified thereby; and so arguing makes special Use of *the Terms* in which the Promise is made, as purposely fitted to its typical respect or mystical sence; So is the Prohibition of breaking a Bone of the Paschal Lamb, which was a Type of Christ, applied by *John* to Christ himself who was typified thereby: *Joh. 19. 36.* with *Exod. 12. 46.*

Howbeit (I conceive) the Apostle hath here a direct and special Eye to that Promise *Gen. 22. 18.* * *In thy Seed shall all the*

* This Promise is particularly cited by *Peter*, as a summary of the Covenant of Grace made with *Abraham*; *Act. 3. 25.*

Families of the Earth be blessed; which runs directly parallel both in Terms and Sence with the Promise given to *Abraham* *Gen. 12. 3.* which was before pleaded by him: *Gal. 3. 8.*

This Promise was given forth in the Repetition and Confirmation of the Covenant before made with him, upon the occasion of *Abraham's* having offered up *Isaac*, whereby the Death and Sacrifice of Christ Jesus was in a most lively manner prefigured; And clearly holds forth thus much, That as all Nations should be blessed in a relation

tion to *Abraham* as his Children, so that Blessing should be derived upon them thro' *Interest in Christ* his promised Seed, and by the Efficacy of his *Mediation* in the Interest of that *Sacrifice and Offering of a sweet smelling Savour*, Eph. 5. 2. that in the fulness of time he should make unto God. And if it be objected, that the Promise there is made of or concerning *Abraham's Seed*, and not to his Seed; let it be minded that all the Promises made of this Seed (*viz.* Christ) in one respect, may be said to be made to this Seed in another, because they are originally established in the everlasting *Covenant of Redemption* that was between the Father and him.

* See Strong of the Covenant p. 126.

* Some do interpret this Text in *Gal.* of Christ mystical, because of the order of the Words, The Promise is made first unto *Abraham*, then unto his Seed; therefore (say they) it is such a Seed as comes to have Right in the Promise; Secondly, to *Abraham* and as his Children; And also because the Apostles Scope is to prove that the Gentiles are justified by Faith, as *Abraham* was. But I should rather apply them to Christ as personally considered; For the Seed to whom the Promise is made, is the same in whom all the Nations of the Earth are blessed, Gen. 22. 18. Now altho' as all Believers being the Seed of *Abraham*, are blessed with faithful *Abraham*, yet are they not that Seed in whom all Nations are blessed, but the Nations who are blessed in this Seed: And in the very

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next Verse the Covenant is said to be established of God εἰς Χριστὸν *in or unto Christ*, who is the *same Seed* spoken of in the preceding Verse; Now the Covenant is confirmed in Christ personal, not in Christ mystical; hence *Paræus* concludes it is to be understood *individue de uno Christo, ex quo omnis spiritualis Benedictio in fideles diffluit.* But this also is to be observed, That Christ is given for a *Covenant of the People*, Isa. 42. 6. and therefore the Covenant is established in him, and with him for all Believers, who by Union with him, become that *One Seed of Abraham* unto whom the *Blessing* of his Covenant doth belong; And so in this sence it as strongly concludes for Justification only by Faith in Christ, as in the other. And for the order of the Words, it need not seem strange that *Abraham* is first mentioned, and then Christ his Seed; for besides that of the Promises chiefly intended, the first saith *in thee*, and that given afterwards, *in thy Seed shall all Nations be blessed* (which is the order the Apostle observes.) This is also to be considered, That *Abraham* was really the *Father of Christ* according to the *Flesh*, and by Covenant appointed so to be, as was *David* also; and yet Christ is not only the *Offspring*, but also the *Root* both of *Abraham* and *David*; And altho' the Mercies of the Covenant, are called the *sure Mercies of David*, because of the Covenant which God made with him; yet are they all originally from Christ in one respect, tho' mediately by Christ in another, as they flow from

a Covenant first made with *David*, which was to be after ratified and fulfilled in Christ the Son of *David* * And perhaps it is upon the account of the Covenants made with *Abraham* and *David* concerning this Matter, that in *Mat. 1.1.* they are so peculiarly mentioned in the Genealogy of Christ as recorded by that Evangelist.

* *Duorum maxime Filius dicitur Christus Abraham & David, quoniam istū sapiens, ac disertus, quam ceteris, est promissus, Lud. Viy.*

§. 8. Fourthly, This Covenant was made with *Abraham* as a Root of Covenant-Blessings, and common Parent unto all true Believers: Indeed *Abraham* himself obtained the Grace of this Covenant by Christ his Seed, and so came into it at the second hand with respect to the Son of God who is the Prince of the Covenant; but with respect unto us, The Covenant was first given unto *Abraham*, and we are brought into it in the Interest of Relation to him as Children, which also is by Faith in Jesus Christ: This special Honour did God put upon *Abraham* by the manner of his entering into Covenant with him, that thenceforth no People should be taken into Covenant with himself but as his Seed. This is evident as to *Israel* after the Flesh in the Old Testament, that their Covenant-Interest was derived from *Abraham*; and it appears as plainly concerning the Spiritual Seed and *Israel of God* in the New Testament, that *Abraham* is their Father *Rom. 4.* and

all true Believers are blessed in him, as his Seed, Gal. 3. 28, 29. with Gen. 12. 3. for by that Promise in Genesis, Abraham was ordained, and constituted of God the Father of the Faithful, as hath been before touched; And hence it is that their Fruition of Paradise is called a resting in Abraham's Bosom, Luk. 16. because as they have their Entrance into a State of Grace, so they are also brought into the Kingdom of Glory, and made to possess Heaven, as his Children. They are also said to sit down with Abraham in the Kingdom of Heaven, Mat. 8. 11.

And Fifthly, The last thing I shall note is, The eternal Settlement of the way of Salvation according to the Tenour of this Covenant, which is by Faith in Christ. This is a Covenant that conveys the Grace of Life to poor Sinners by a free and gracious Promise; which admits of no other Requisition in order to Covenant-Interest but Believing; It is of Faith because it is of Grace; Rom. 4. 16. And this way is the only way of Life; There is but one Covenant of spiritual and eternal Blessings in Christ Jesus, founded in the eternal Decree and Counsel of God's Love and Grace, which is now revealed unto Abraham; and there is but one Seed, which is of true Believers in Union with Christ, promised to him as the Heirs of this Covenant, and the Grace given thereby; and thus is the Way of their Justification and Acceptance with God determined, not by a natural De-

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scant from *Abraham*, or any external Priviledg appendent thereunto, but by a walking in the Footsteps of *Abraham's Faith*, Rom. 4. 13. who is made the Exemplar of Justification unto all in future Ages, for whose perpetual Instruction this is recorded; *That he believed God, and it was accounted to him for Righteousness.* The Tenour therefore of the Promise now given unto *Abraham* could never be altered, nor any ways evacuated, or superseded by any future Dispensation that the Church was brought under; but whatsoever Law or Covenant was afterwards given unto them, must of necessity lye in an order of Subserviency unto it, and be directed towards the ushering in of the Perfection of that Dispensation of Grace which was unalterably fixed thereby Gal. 3. 17. It was the everlasting Gospel that was now preached unto *Abraham*, which was afterwards to break forth with the fullest Glory and Lustre in the days of the Messiah, when the Lord performed his Mercy to *Abraham*, and remembered his holy Covenant Luk. 1. 72, &c.

I shall now close this Chapter with some *Corollaries* deduced from the things already cleared; and then proceed in the Method before propounded. This Covenant of Grace whereof we have been speaking, and which the Holy Ghost in the New Testament hath so remarkably pointed out to us, whereby *Abraham* was made the Father of

the Faithful, and all Believers according to it were to be considered as a *Seed* that God would give to him, was confirmed and ratified by a sure Promise unto *Abraham* a considerable time *before* the *Covenant of Circumcision* was given to him; *viz.* about *twenty five Years* before it; and had then no *outward Sign* or *Seal* annexed thereto. And indeed that which hath been of late affirmed, *That the Covenant of Grace always had an outward Sign or Seal added to it*, is so wide a Mistake, that on the contrary it may be affirmed, That altho' the Efficacy of its Grace did reach Believers in all Ages, yet it was not filled up with Ordinances of Worship proper, and peculiar to it self, until the times of Reformation; nor had till then any outward Sign or Token immediately belonging thereunto; For had it been so, this Sign or Token, as the *Covenant* it self, had remained without Change, and not vanished away with the other *Shadows* of the *Mosaical Oeconomy*.

2. The Promise made unto *Abraham* gives the *Seed*, as well as the *Blessing* of that *Seed* unto him; Believers are the *Children of Promise* Typified by *Isaac* afterwards, being begotten unto God of his own Will by the Efficacy and Grace of his free Promise and in the Virtue thereof; yea the *Seed* is first supposed in the Promise, and then the *Blessing* of that *Seed* is promised, which being of Grace, is made sure unto all of them, *Rom. 4. 16.* And as the *Blessing* is spiritual, so is the *Seed* also; nor can it be extended farther then to that *Seed* which

which is the *promised Subject* thereof.

3. The *Sum of all Gospel blessings* being comprized in *this Promise*, it will hence follow, That the proper Heirs of this Blessing of *Abraham* have a Right (not only in some, but) in *all the Promises* of the *New Covenant*; and that not in a limited Sence, and as suspended on uncertain Conditions, but in a *full Sence*, and as secured by the infinite Grace, Wisdom, Power, and Faithfulness of God, and accordingly they are in time made good to them all.

And this will be more manifest, if we consider, that all the Blessings of this Covenant redound upon Believers by means of their *Union and Communion with the Lord Jesus Christ*, who is both the *Head*, and *Root* of the *New-Covenant*, and the *Fountain* from whence all its Blessings are derived to us, which as they were *intirely purchased by him*, so are they *intirely applied* to all that are *in him*, and to none other;

The *Limitation* therefore of a *New Covenant-Interest* to the Grant of an *external and temporary Priviledg only*, I conceive to be utterly inconsistent with the *Promises of the Covenant it self*; even such as these *Isa. 54. 13. chap. 59. 21. Jer. 31. 33, 34. Ezek. 36. 26, 27. with Heb. 8.* and many others of like import; Neither will these Texts admit of *another Notion* of late insisted on for the Commendation of *Pædo-Baptism. viz.*

“That the *Infant Seed of Believers*, during *their Infancy*, have all of them a certain and

“definite Interest in the Covenant of Grace by vir-
 “tue of which they are compleatly justified be-
 “fore God from the Guilt of original Sin; both
 “*Originans*, and *Originatum*; and yet when they
 “come to Years of Discretion may, (yea must)
 “by their *actual* closing with, or refusing the
 “Terms of the Covenant, either obtain the Con-
 “tinuation and Confirmation of their Covenant-
 “Interest, or be utterly and finally cut off from
 “it, and so perish eternally in their Ignorance of
 “God, and Rebellion against him.

And as the Promises of the Covenant will ad-
 mit of no such *partial Interest* therein, so neither
 can this Opinion consist with the *Analogy* of Faith
 in other Respects; For either the *Stain* of origi-
 nal Sin in these Infants is purged, and the *Domini-*
on of Concupiscence in them destroyed, when
 their Guilt is *pardoned*, or it is not; If it be, then
 the case of these Infants in point of *Perseverance*,
 is the same with that of Adult Persons that are un-
 der Grace by their actual Faith; and then a *final*
Apostacy from the Grace of the New Covenant
 must be allowed possible to befall the one as well
 as the other, notwithstanding all the Provisions
 of the Covenant, and Engagement of God there-
 in, to make the Promise *sure unto all the Seed*:
 But this the Author will not admit: If he say
 that their *Guilt is pardoned*, but their *Natures are*
not renewed, nor the Power of original Corrupti-
 on destroyed, so as that *Sin shall not have Dominion*
over them; It will be replied; that then notwith-
 standing

standing their supposed Pardon, they remain an *unclean thing*, and so incapable of Admission into the Kingdom of Glory; But the Truth is, *None* are at any time justified before God; but such as *Christ hath loved, and washed from their Sins in his own Blood*; Rev. 1. 5. And none are *united by him*; but those that are *in him*; as the *second Adam*; It is by Union to him as the Root of the New-Covenant, that the free Gift comes upon them to the Justification of *Rom. 5. 14, &c.* Life; And none can have Union to him but by the *in-dwelling of his holy Spirit*; and wherever the Spirit of God applies the Blood of Christ for the Remission of Sins, he doth it also for the purging of the Conscience from dead Works to serve the living God; And as certainly as any derive a New-Covenant Right from Christ for Pardon, they also receive a vital Influence from him for the Renovation of their Natures, and conforming their Souls to his own Image. And therefore to assert, That the Grace of Christ is applied to some for the Remission of Sins only, or that the Guilt of any Sin can be pardoned to any Person, and yet that Sin retain its Dominion over him, is (so far as I can discern) both unscriptural, and incoherent with the Doctrine that is according to Godliness.

4. To conclude; It is plain, That a Believers Claim to the Blessings of the New-Covenant is in the Interest of *Abraham's Seed*, and by virtue of the Promises given to him relating to such a Seed, and not as *Coordinate with him in Covenant-*

Interest; They are not each one by this Covenant made the Father of a blessed Seed, as *Abraham* was the Father of the Faithful; neither can they claim the Promise for themselves and their Seed according to the Tenour of *Abraham's* Covenant, and as he might; but they must rest in a Relation to him as Children, and so receive his Blessing, that is, the Blessing promised to him for *his Seed*, and that by their own Faith, and for themselves alone: Believers because they are *Abraham's* Seed, are blessed with faithful *Abraham*; And, *If we be Christs, then are we Abraham's Seed, and Heirs according to the Promise,* Gal. 3. 29.

Of the Covenant of Circumcision.

C H A P. V.

The Subject of our present Inquiry ; the Promises gived to Abraham for his natural Offspring ; these given forth gradually ; all summed up in the Covenant of Circumcision §. 1. Gen. 12. 2. farther opened in its respect to the carnal Seed ; Abraham called out of Ur of the Chaldees ; Heb. 11. 8. conferred with Gen. 11. 32. their Harmony shewed. §. 2. Abraham comes into Canaan, and builds an Altar ; his Journey into Egypt, Return to Canaan ; parting from Lot ; the renewing of the Promise thereupon. §. 3. Gen. 13. 15. opened ; how the Promise of the Land of Canaan was made good to Abraham ; in what sense said to be an everlasting Possession. §. 4. The History in Gen. 15. considered ; the 6th Verse explained ; the Promise renewed, and enlarged ; the Bondage of Israel in Egypt foretold ; The time limited to 400 Years ;
when

when they began ; one reason why the Promise was no sooner to take place ; the Iniquity of the Amorites not yet full ; how the Curse of Parents comes righteously upon their Children. §. 5. The Seed of Abraham, and their Inheritance first given by Promise ; One consequence of this. Abraham goeth in to Hagar ; the Reason of it ; as yet no mention of a Distinction of Abraham's natural Offspring among themselves ; nor any distinguishing Character appointed for them ; his Seed in remote Generations, as well as in an immediate Descent from him, intended in the Promises. §. 6. The Covenant of Circumcision ; why so called ; Gen. 17. 1. opened ; This a Prælude to the Sinai Covenant. §. 7. Gen. 17. 4, 5. opened ; The Promise of the New-Covenant rehearsed ; Two reasons thereof ; Abram's Name changed to Abraham ; How Circumcision became a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith, briefly touched ; The necessity of distinguishing of the Promises given to Abraham, and of the Seed to which they belong. §. 8. Gen. 17. 6. opened ; the first Intimation of a distinction of Tribes in Israel. §. 9. The general Scope of Gen.

Gen. 17.7,8. the word Everlasting how to be taken as applyed to this Covenant; no proof of its being a Covenant of spiritual Blessings deducible from thence. §. 10. The Church-State of Israel after the Flesh, the principal Blessing of this Covenant; This evinced by the Story of Ishmael and Esau; Their Exclusion from this Covenant; The preference of Israel's Lot. §. 11.

§. 1. **T**HE Method before laid down leads us in the next place to inquire after the Promises given to *Abraham* for his natural Offspring and the Assurance of them, which it pleased God to give him by Covenant-Transactions. And here (as formerly) I shall diligently review the History that *Moses* wrote of these things by the Inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and comparing the Promises made, with the Records of their Accomplishment in other parts of holy Writ, endeavour to collect from both, the true Import and Extent of them, with the proper Nature and Ends of that Covenant, unto which in a peculiar manner they do belong. Only this I shall premit to the whole,

That these Promises were not all made unto *Abraham* at one time, Nor the Covenant of them perfected by one Transaction, but they were given forth by several Parts and Degrees, until at

at last the whole *Charter* of Priviledges and Blessings granted to the natural Offspring of *Abraham* was fairly drawn, and the Covenant of them sealed by Circumcision: This will immediately appear in the historical Account we shall have of these things; and some Regard hereunto may be also remarked in the Progression of *Stephen's* Discourse when he gives a Recapitulation of them. *Act. 7. 5, 6, 7, 8.*

§. 2. In *Gen. 12. 2.* we find, That when the God of Glory first appeared unto *Abraham*, and called him out from his own Country, from his Kindred and from his Fathers House, besides the Promise of spiritual Blessings that was given to him both for himself and his spiritual Seed, he had also the Promise of a numerous Offspring which should naturally descend from him: No less can be intended in these Words, *I will make of thee a great Nation*, than this; Thou shalt be the Father of a great Nation which shall spring and issue from thy Loyns: such is the plain Sense of the like Words to *Moses Num. 14. 12.* And this Promise with the rest, *Abraham* embraced by Faith; for to an Eye of Reason there was no present Likelihood of its Accomplishment, seeing at this time he had no Child (for want of which he also makes Complaint a considerable time after this *Gen. 15. 2, 3.*) and *Sarah* his Wife was barren; Yet esteeming him faithful and able to make good his Word that had

given him these Promises, he embraced them, and upon the Call of God *navali etiam. Cui non magis est dulce proprium tugurium quam palatia Perigrina.* * forsook all that before was dear unto him, and went out, not knowing whither he went. Heb. 11. 8. For it doth not appear that the Land of Canaan was mentioned to him at his first calling, but rather an absolute Resignation of himself unto divine Goodness and Conduct was required of him, and he knew no more than this, that he must travel from his own to another Country, which was to a Land that God would shew to him; tho' as yet he knew not what, or where it was; And therefore tho' we read Gen. 11. 32. That he went from Ur of the Chaldees to go into the Land of Canaan, I conceive those Words are to be taken as an historical Anticipation, and not a Relation of what fell within Abraham's Knowledge and Intention, when he first undertook his Journey. His Peregrination was in the Counsel of God determined to the Land of Canaan, and by a divine Conduct he was brought thither, tho' himself knew not the Place designed,

designed, at least, not till he came nearer to it, viz. unto *Haran*, where the Lord gave him a second Call after the Death of *Terah*, to proceed in his Journey to the Land of

Gen. 12. 4, 5. Canaan.

§. 3. When *Abraham* came into the Land of *Canaan* unto the Place of *Shechem* the plain of *Morah* (the Progeny of cursed *Canaan* being then the Inhabitants of the Country) the Lord appeared unto him again, and gave him a full and expresse Promise of that Land

Gen. 12. 6, 7. (which for Pleasantness and Fertility was the Glory of all Lands) for an Inheritance unto his Seed; And there he first built an Altar unto the Lord, that by worshipping him he might testify his Gratitude for the Promise so freely given to him, and also receive a Ratification of it in the Blood of his accepted Sacrifice. Soon after this a Famine drives *Abraham* into *Egypt*; and there *Sarah's*

Chastity was endangered by the *Egyptian King*, but the Lord's rebuke upon him delivered his Servant from that Affliction; and by his good Providence he was again brought back in Peace to the Land of *Canaan*. All this time *Lot*, *Abraham's* Brother's Son was with him, but now their Substance being increased and some Contention happening between their Servants, *Abraham* to take up the present Controversie and

and prevent the like, makes a Proposal for their parting the one from the other, which was accepted of by Lot; Gen. 13. And after that Lot was separated from Abraham, the Lord again renew and confirms the Promise of the Land of Canaan to him, and of the great Increase of his Seed that should possess it, with a special Command to Abraham to walk thro' it in the Length thereof, and the Breadth thereof, to survey, and by Faith to take Possession of it; while as yet he was a Stranger and had no Inheritance in it; no not so much as to set his Foot on. *Ab. 7.*

§. 4. In the Promise thus renewed there are two things that require some farther Explanation.

First, The Conveyance of this Inheritance is directly made first unto Abraham himself, and then, unto his Seed; *All the Land which thou seest to thee will I give it, and to thy Seed; Gen. 12. 7. 15.* Now it is evident, Abraham had no Possession in it all his Days, save that of a Burying-place which he after purchased for his Money paid to the full value thereof; *Gen. 23.* And like was the Case also of Isaac and Jacob, who were the Heirs of this Promise together with Abraham, *Heb. 11. 9.* A Question therefore ariseth, How was this Promise made good to Abraham?

In Answer hereunto (waving at present the Typical Respect of the promised Land, and Abraham's Inheritance of the spiritual and heavenly Blessings

Blessings signified thereby) observe,

1. That as to those Words *to thee, and to thy Seed*, the latter may be taken as an Interpretation of the former, and then the sense is, *to thee, that is, to thy Seed*: The Hebrew Particle here

used, is undoubtedly to be

See *Ans. Annot.* taken in this sense in some other places, and is to be interpreted not as Copulative by *And*, but as explicative by *Even*, or *that is*, See 1 Chron. 21. 12. where it is so rendered; And the like Interpretation must be given of it in 2 Sam. 17. 12. *Of him and (rather that is) of all the Men that are with him there shall not be left so much as one.* Now this rendring removes all appearance of Difficulty from the Text.

2. A Man may have *jus ad rem* that hath not *jus in re*; All Right, is not perfectly actionable, but a Man may have a Right to an Inheritance by Promise or otherwise, without the *Right of present Possession*, which he may not enter upon till a long time after, or perhaps not himself, but his Posterity are to be possessed of it by that *Right* which is at present made over to him; Neither doth the annexing such Terms render the Promise vain or fruitless unto him that first receives it; for the Assurance that the Good promised shall in its time certainly redound upon his Offspring, is a present Comfort to himself, as it is an Honour also for him this way to be made capable of transmitting such a Right to them. And therefore it was a pleasing Thought to old

Jacob

Blessings

Jacob when he lay dying, *That God would surely visit his Children and bring them up out of Egypt to inherit the promised Land*; *Gen. 48. 5; 20, 21.* tho' he went to his Fathers without sight of its Accomplishment: As it was also a special Favour to *Ephraim* and *Manasseth*, that by *Jacob's* Blessing each of them obtained a Right in *Canaan* equal with the Brethren of their Father, and yet themselves enjoyed not the temporal Good of that Blessing, but their Posterity after them. And indeed, that is properly said to be given to Parents which is given to their Posterity upon the Account of that Promise which they have received, and which makes them the Heads of that Covenant-Blessing which descends upon their Offspring. And that the Fathers embraced the Promise in this sense, is put beyond doubt, by the express Limitation of the time of its Accomplishment in *Gen. 15. 13; 16.*

Legis Riveti exercitationem in Locum; ubi dubium hoc proponitur & accurate solvitur.

Secondly, The other Difficulty ariseth from the Extent of the Promise in point of time; for here God promiseth to give this Land to *Abraham* and to his seed for ever, and again *Gen. 17. 8. for an everlasting Possession*; whereas it is evident they have now for many Ages been disinherited of it. But the Solution of this Doubt will be easie to him that consults the Use of these Terms in other Texts, and the necessary Restriction of their Sense when applyed to the State or Concern-

ments of *Abraham's* Seed in the Land of *Canaan*; For the Priesthood of *Levi* is called an *everlasting Priesthood* Num. 25. 13. and the Gates of the Temple *everlasting Doors* Psal. 24. 6. and this in the same sence, as *Canaan*, is said to be an *everlasting Inheritance*; no more being intended than the Continuance of these for a long time, viz. throughout the Old Testament Oeconomy, until the days of the *Messiah* comm only spoken of by the Jews under the Notion of *the World to come*; wherein a new State of things was to be expected, and when their old Covenant Right and Priviledge was to expire, as having its proper End and Design now fully accomplished.

§. 5. In *Gen. 15.* we have an account of another solemn Transaction of God with *Abraham*, wherein (besides other things included and intermixt) the Promises before given to *Abraham* concerning his carnal Seed and their Inheritance, are renewed, and farther explained in diverse Particulars. And *Abraham* being now more stricken in years than when he first received the Promise, and as yet having no Son, tho' his eternal Happiness, as well as other Blessings, depended on the Seed that should be given to him, he was now brought to a greater Tryal of his Faith then formerly; and the present acting of it being rendred the more Illustrious by the Difficulties it overcame, the Holy Ghost is pleased in this Place to give an expresse Testimony there-

to

to; ver. 6. He believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for Righteousness. And Conf. Rom. 4. this is the first time that either Believing or the Imputation of Righteousness is in *terminis* mentioned in the Scripture; Not but that both these were true of *Abraham* before, even from the first giving out of the Promise to him Gen. 12. He then believed in the Lord; and he accounted it to him for Righteousness; but as his Faith was now manifested in a higher Degree, so it pleased God from this time to leave upon Record a more particular *Encomium* thereof than formerly. And as a farther Token of Favour, immediately hereupon follows that *Explication* and *Inlargement* of the Promise to his natural Offspring that was before mentioned. Many things I shall pass over, and only note here these few that follow, as direct to my present Purpose.

1. The Lord informs *Abraham* of the Affliction that should befall his Posterity, and the seeming *Death* that should be upon the Promise before they were brought into the Inheritance of the Land of *Canaan*; And also particularly limits the time thereof; they should be afflicted *four hundred Years*, the Account of which (I suppose) must take its Rise from the mocking of *Isaac* the Heir of the Promise by *Ishmael* the Son of *Hagar* the Egyptian; from which to the deliverance of *Israel* from their Bondage in *Egypt* is exactly four hundred Years.

2. The Lord gives *Abraham* an Assurance that in the appointed time he will redeem them from their Servitude, and that by signal Judgments upon their Oppressors, and so great Favour to them, as should suddenly change their Condition from Want and Penury, to the Enjoyment of great Riches and Substance: *Gen. 15. 14.* And as for *Abraham*; himself should go to his Fathers in Peace, and be buried in a good old Age; and in the fourth Generation the Blessing of this Promise should certainly come upon his Posterity; *ver. 15, 16.* The exact Accomplishment of all this you may read in the Book of *Exodus*; all

Exod. 2. 24. Act. 7. 17. the Wonders there recorded being the Birth of these Promises; for it was not the Goodness of the People, but the Stability of the Promise that all those things are to be ascribed to.

3. A Reason is given for the referring of the Accomplishment of the Promise to this time; Because the Nations whole Land they were to possess were not yet ripe for Judgment; and the Measure of their Iniquity must be filled up before the Curse of *Canaan* was fully executed upon them. Thus we see, that although the Children of *Canaan* bare his Curse many Generations after him, yet this Curse descended not upon them without a full Measure of their own Sin; as there is no doubt but *Canaan's* partnership with *Cham* in his Wickedness did at first bring the
Curse

Curse of his Father upon himself. But to return,

4. These things are expressly said to have been transacted in a way of *Covenant* with *Abraham*; and also the Bounds of *Israel's* Inheritance are set, and those Nations marked out by Name that were to be dispossessed and destroyed by them.

*Gen. 15. 18, 19,
20, 21.*

§. 6. Before we pass on farther in the History of God's Transactions with *Abraham* respecting his natural Offspring; Let it be observed;

1. That as this Seed was afterwards raised up to *Abraham* by virtue of a Promise, so the first Grant of the Land of *Canaan* to them for an Inheritance was by a gratuitous Promise also; and that Promise past into the Form of a Covenant with *Abraham* long before the giving of the Law as a Condition of their Inheritance therein, yea before the Institution of Circumcision; And the Original of their Claim being from a *free Promise*, the Severity of that Law which afterwards they came under, was so far restrained thereby, as that (notwithstanding their manifold Breach of Covenant with God, and Forfeiture of all *legal Claim* of their Rights and Priviledges in the Land of *Canaan* thereby) they were never utterly cut off from that good Land, nor ceased to be a peculiar People unto God, until the End of their being *made so*, was fully answered, and

that Promise expired with the Accomplishment of its Design, in the Introduction of the *Israel* of God, to the full Enjoyment of those spiritual Blessings, which were the Substance of what was but darkly shadowed, by their temporal Enjoyments. This will be of great Use in our Reflections upon the Typical State of that People, which I shall not now enlarge upon.

2. Hitherto it is not expressly signified, That *Sarai* shall be the Mother of this Seed; And therefore in the delay of the Promise, *Abraham* and *Sarai* (not knowing but it might be fulfilled that way) agreed about *Abraham's* going in to *Hagar* the Hand-maid of *Sarai*, that by her they might obtain Children; *Gen.* 16. It will be granted that on good grounds they might have other Apprehensions of the Promise before (as it will appear they had, by Conference of *Gen.* 15. with *Rom.* 4.) and that this proceeded from some Vacillation, and weakness of Faith in them; but yet it was not such as did directly cross, and call into Question the Promises before given; neither doth any thing appear to the contrary but that *Abraham* accounted of *Ishmael* as Heir of the Promise, until the Lord appeared to him again *Gen.* 17. and fully compleated his Covenant with him about his natural Offspring.

3. Much less was there as yet any Intimation given of a Distinction to be made, in point of Priviledge or Covenant-Right, betwixt the Children that might in one way or another be brought

brought forth unto *Abraham*: But the Claim of such (suposing, as it after proved, that there might be many) seemed to be equal, until the farther stating thereof *Gen. 17*. Neither was there as yet any distinguishing Character appointed for his Seed as a Foundation for their rising up into such a *Church-State*, as that the solemn Institutions of divine Service should be appropriate to them, and none accounted Members of the visible Church but themselves, and such as became *Proselytes* to them. Tho' its true all that hath been before mentioned, was disposed in order hereunto, being in the wise Counsel of God directed towards such an End; for known unto him are all his Works, from the Beginning; And therefore the former Promises are still recollected, and taken in, in the after Transactions about this People.

4. The Promises hitherto given unto *Abraham* for his natural Offspring, do as much concern them in remote Generations, as in an immediate Descent from him; nay in some Respects were more fully made good unto them than the other; for it was not until the fourth Generation that God was known to them by his Name *JEHOVAH*, *Exod. 6*. in the actual Accomplishing of his Word; the Fathers having only his *Alfufficiency* ingaged for the after fulfilling of the Promise in its proper Season. It was not *Abraham's* immediate, but his mediate Seed that became numerous as the Dust of the Earth, and took Possession of

the Land flowing with Milk and Honey.

§. 7. We shall now pass on to *Gen. 17.* And what is there more largely recorded, we have briefly pointed at by *St phen* in his general view of the History of *Israel Act. 7. 8.* And he gave him the Covenant of Circumcision; And so *Abraham* begat *Isaac &c.* By the Covenant of Circumcision, we are to understand that Covenant of which Circumcision was the Sign or Token; or that Covenant in which a Restipulation was required by the Observation of this Rite or Ordinance; as in *Gen. 17. 9, 10, 11.*

It is observable, That in this Transaction of God with *Abraham* we first meet with an express Injunction of Obedience to a Command (and that of positive Right) as the Condition of Covenant-Interest; And the whole is ushered in with this Prologue *Gen. 17. 1.* *I am the Almighty God; walk before me and be thou perfect.* In which Words, first the *Al sufficiency* of God is revealed for the Ensurance of the Promises; and then a strict and intire Obedience to his Precepts is required in order to the Inheritance of the good things that were to be given by this Covenant; And in this Mode of transacting it, the Lord was pleased to draw the first Lines of that Form of Covenant-Relation, which the natural Seed of *Abraham*, were fully stated in by the Law of *Moses*, which was a Covenant of Works, and its Condition or Tern s, *Do this and live.* For altho' the Cove-
nant

nant of Grace made with *Abraham* hath in all Respects (as well in point of time, as Excellency) the *Precedence* to the Covenant made with his carnal Seed in *Isaac's* Line; yet in the wise Counsel of God things were so ordered, That the full Revelation of the Covenant of Grace, the actual Accomplishment of the great Promises thereof, and its being filled up with Ordinances proper thereunto, should succeed the Covenant made with *Israel* after the *Flesh*, And take place upon the Dissolution thereof when it waxed old and vanished away. And therefore the Covenant-Interest of the natural Seed, was to be perfected by the Law of *Moses*, before the Gospel preached unto *Abraham*, was unveiled; and accordingly this Chapter leads us on a great Step towards the *Sinai Covenant*, and the Terms thereof.

§. 8. Altho' this Covenant of Circumcision do properly and immediately belong to the natural Seed of *Abraham*, and is ordered as a *Foundation* of that *Oeconomy* which they were to be brought under until the times of *Reformation*; yet by way of Preface thereunto you have (in *Gen. 17. 4, 5.*) a Recapitulation of former Transactions, and a renewed Confirmation of one great Promise of the Covenant of Grace before given to *Abraham*, viz. *A Father of many Nations have I made thee*; That this is principally to be understood of his believing Seed, collected out of all Nations indifferently, appears from
Rom.

Rom. 4. 17. And that *Abraham* was constituted the *Father of the faithful* before this Covenant of Circumcision was made, and did not obtain the Grant of this Priviledg thereby, hath been before proved from *Moses's* History, and is also argued by the Apostle strongly in the former part of that forementioned *Rom. 4.* Nevertheless, That it should be thus repeated in this place, there is very great reason, upon a twofold Account;

1. That it might be evident; that *the Covenant of Peculiarity* with the carnal Seed, which was first to take place, and that Wall of Separation which was to be raised up betwixt them and other Nations (the corner Stone of which was now to be laid in Circumcision) should not evacuate, or intrench upon the Covenant of Grace, or the Right and Priviledg of the spiritual Seed stated therein, or of any part of it; but was added, and made *subservient* to the great Ends thereof: The Springs of New-Covenant-Mercy, which God had before opened to all Nations were not to be shut up again by this Covenant; nor the Heathen * excluded; from inheriting the Blessing of *Abraham*, thro' Faith in Je-

sus Christ, by any Priviledg or Right conferred upon the Jew: And therefore when the Covenant of Circumcision was given to the carnal Seed, in order to a full Separation of them from other Nations, It pleased God, therewith to re-

vive

* Read diligently
Gal. 3.

vive the Remembrance of that Promise of the Covenant of Grace, which should in due time bring forth Salvation to the Gentiles; That so, there might be no colour of Reason left for interpreting this Covenant to their Prejudice, in the straitening of the Grace of the Gospel, which was designed of God only as an *Handmaid* there-
to.

2. Because, Things were so ordered by God in this Covenant, that as the Promises thereof, should be *subordinate* to the great Promise; so also spiritual Blessings should be mystically implied in them; so *Abraham's* being the Father of Believers of many Nations, was typified in his numerous Offspring, by *Isaac*, viz, *Israel* after the Flesh: And hence, a Confirmation and sealing of the one, must include a Ratification of the other also: And therefore at the same time, to assure *Abraham* that he should certainly become the Father of * a Multitude,
or, of many Nations his Name * אברהם נרם *
is changed into *Abraham*; and also Circumcision is instituted for the sealing of the Promises made to his carnal Seed; The mutual respect of these different Promises, and the order observed in their Establishment, being such; Circumcision it self was so far from *everting* the Covenant of Grace, in its Promise to the Gentiles, as that it became to *Abraham* a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith: Rom. 4. 11. This it had, not from its next and peculiar End, or its proper
Nature,

Nature, with respect to all the carnal Seed, or others, that were to be the *Subjects* of it; but from the *Disposition of the Covenant* to which it was annexed, and the *present Circumstances of Abraham*, with whom it was made, and to whom Circumcision was now given for a Seal thereof. But this we must farther enlarge upon, in speaking to *The mutual respect of God's Federal-Transactions with Abraham*; And at present it shall suffice to remind you,

That there is no way of avoiding Confusion and Intanglements, in our Conception of these things, but by keeping before our Eyes the *distinction of Abraham's Seed*, which is either *spiritual* or *carnal*, and of the Promises respectively belonging to either: For this whole Covenant of Circumcision, as given to the carnal Seed, can no more convey spiritual and eternal Blessings to them as such, then it can now inright a Believer (tho' a Child of *Abraham*) in their temporal, and typical Blessings in the Land of *Canaan*; Neither can I see any reason for an Assignment of Covenant-Interest in all spiritual Blessings typified, as well as in the temporal Blessings that were the Types of them, to the carnal Seed; and yet not to admit the Conveyance of the same Covenant to hold good in point of temporal Blessings, to the spiritual Seed; seeing (as some conceive) both are directly included in the same Covenant; and the Promise of both was sealed with the same Seal.

But

But the Truth is, Notwithstanding *the respect* this Covenant hath to the Covenant of Grace, it yet remains *distinct* from it; and can give no more then *external and typical Blessings unto a typical Seed*: The stating of their Rights and Priviledges, in *Subserviency*, and with a *typical Respect*, to the Dispensation of Grace to the Elect, in the New-Covenant, is the proper End, and Design of this Transaction in *Gen. 17.* as will more fully appear in the particular Account of the Promises given therein.

§. 9. The Sum of those Promises is set before us in *Gen. 17. 6, 7, 8.* In the 6th Verse; The Promise of a numerous Offspring is repeated in such Terms as do import (if not Inlargement, yet at least) a farther Explication of what was before promised in *Gen. 13. 16.* *And I will make thy Seed as the Dust of the Earth, &c.* For here the Promise runs thus; *I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make Nations of thee; and Kings shall come out of thee.* These Words in their first and literal Sence had their Accomplishment in the natural Offspring of *Abraham*; and are particularly intended of his Seed by *Isaac*; For tho' it be true that other Nations besides *Israel* did spring from *Abraham*, yet the Context will evince it to be that Seed with which the Covenant of Circumcision should be established, that is here meant; and that was with the Seed of *Abraham* by *Isaac* only. To see therefore the fulfilling of
this

this Promise, we must look to the *twelve Tribes of Israel*, that were as so many *distinct Peoples, and Nations*, with respect to their *Power and Number*; tho' with respect to *Religion and Government* united in one *Polity*, and so but one *People*: And to this Promise *Jacob* hath an Eye in his blessing of the *Sons of Joseph* *Gen. 48. 19.* where he saith that *Manasseth* (the Father of one of the Tribes of *Israel*) *shall be a People, and shall become great*: i. e. His Seed shall be numerous and strong, and shall make up *one People, or one of the Nations*, that God had promised should come of *Abraham*: And yet *Ephraim* his younger Brother must have the *Preeminence* in being the Father of another distinct *People, or Tribe*, that should be stronger then *Manasseth* and more numerous; in that his Seed should become *the Fulness of Nations* (so it is in the *Hebrew*) i. e. a very great Nation and *People*. That *Distinction of Tribes* which was after observed among the *Israelites*, seems to be first pointed at in these Words, *I will make Nations of thee*; And the following Words, *viz. Kings shall come out of thee*; do not only signify the *Eminency* of *Abraham's* Seed in general, but more particularly respect their forming under a distinct *Polity*, and *Government* of their own, or (as *Ezekiel* speaks *Chap. 36.*) *prospering into a Kingdom*; and living under the *Rule and Conduct* of *Judges*, and *Princes* raised up among themselves; as they were from *Moses* his time (who was *King* in *Jeshurun*

Jeshurum, when the Heads of the People and the Tribes gathered themselves together, Deut. 33. 5.) by whose Ministry God settled their State, and Government, by Laws peculiar to themselves, and fulfilled the Covenant of their Fathers therein. This Branch of the Promise contains more than was expressly given to Abraham before.

§. 10. In the following Words Gen. 17. 7. we have the Assurance of this, and of the ensuing Promises also, which God gives unto Abraham by passing them into a solemn Covenant, and consequently, an Interposition of himself, and Engagement of all the Perfections and Properties of his divine Nature, to be exerted for the making of them good: Thus you read; *And I will establish my Covenant between me and thee; and thy Seed after thee in their Generations; for an everlasting Covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy Seed after thee.*

Unto this is added the Promise of their Inheritance, Ver. 8. *And I will give unto thee, and to thy Seed after thee, the Land wherein thou art a Stranger; all the Land of Canaan for an everlasting Possession; and I will be thine God.*

The Difficulty arising from those Terms in the Promise which give the Right of the Inheritance of Canaan to Abraham in the first place, hath been already considered and cleared; as also how the Land of Canaan may be said to be an everlasting Possession: And in the same sense is this Covenant said

said to be *everlasting* : *Israel* could not be finally cut off from the promised Inheritance, until the Covenant it self, by which it was given to them did expire : As was, therefore, the Duration of the Inheritance, and of *Israel's* Right therein, so was the Duration of this Covenant, *Everlasting*, not absolutely, but with such a Limitation as the Nature of the things spoken of doth necessarily require, and as is usual in those Scriptures that speak of things pertaining to the Jewish State. There is therefore, no more Reason to conclude from *this Term*, That the Covenant of Circumcision was directly and properly a Covenant of spiritual and eternal Blessings, than there is to affirm that the Land of *Canaan* and the good things thereof, were a spiritual and eternal Inheritance.

§. 11. Howbeit, From the strict Connexion of this 7th *Versè* with the 6th, and the Assurance here given that *God will establish his Covenant with the Seed of Abraham, to be their God* ; it is evident ;

That the Number of *Abraham's* carnal Seed, and the *Grandeur of their civil State*, is not all that is promised in this Covenant, nor yet the principal Blessing bestowed on them therein ; but rather, *The forming of them into a Church-State*, with the Establishment of the Ordinances of publick Worship among them, wherein they should walk in a Covenant-Relation to God, as
his

his peculiar People (understand it still of the old Covenant, whereing they had their peculiar Right and Priviledg) No less can be intended in this, *I will be a God unto them in their Generations*; And it is also made more evident by the following Account that is given of this Transaction with respect to *Isaac* and *Ishmael*; Gen. 17. 18--21.

When the Lord had promised unto *Abraham* a Son by *Sarah*, whose Name should be called *Isaac*; he thus prays for *Ishmael*, *O that Ishmael might live before thee!* which the *Chaldee* paraphraseth thus, *might live, and Worship before thee*: No doubt his Prayer was, that *Ishmael* might also be an Heir of the Blessing of this Covenant; But that was not granted to him; for the Lord would have *his Covenant-Seed called in Isaac only*: with him God would establish his Covenant, having appointed and chosen him alone to be the Heir thereof, who was to be a Child of Promise, and Son of the Free-Woman: And yet for *Ishmael* (in special Favour to *Abraham*, whose Seed he was) thus much is obtained, that he should be made fruitful, and multiplied exceedingly; twelve Princes, or Heads of great Families, should spring of him (which imports some Analogy to the twelve Tribes of *Israel* after the Flesh, whose old Covenant-State was typified in *Ishmael*) and God would make him a great Nation: And yet all this lay short of the Blessing of *Abraham's* natural Offspring by *Isaac*; from

I

which

which *Ishmael* was now excluded; It is plain therefore, that the *Priviledg* of the *Ecclesiastical*, as well as the *flourishing* of the *Civil State* of *Israel* did arise unto them out of the Covenant of Circumcision.

The like may be observed of *Esau* afterwards, whom the Lord rejected before he was born; excluding him from the *Priviledg* and *Blessing* of this Covenant, which descended upon *Jacob* only: And yet *Esau* was also the Father of a great Nation, and of many Kings, and had the Inheritance of many outward Blessings assigned to him, *Gen.* 27. 39.

We conclude therefore, That notwithstanding the carnal Seed of *Abraham* could not, as such, claim a Right in the spiritual and eternal Blessings of the New-Covenant, because of their Interest in the Covenant of Circumcision; yet their *Priviledges* and *Advantages* in their Church-State, tho' immediately consisting in things outward and typical, were of far greater Value and Use, than any meer worldly, or earthly Blessing; as giving them choyce means of the Knowledge of God; and setting them nearer to him than any Nation in the World besides.

Of the Covenant of Circumcision.

CHAP. VI.

The general design of this Chapter : Two Propositions laid down. §. 1. The first Proposition ; that the mediate and remote Seed of Abraham in Isaac's Line are included in the Covenant of Circumcision : Proved from the Terms of the Promise ; and the Instance of their Children who fell in the Wilderness. §. 2. Farther confirmed from Ezek. 16. 20, 21. §. 3. The Current of sacred History ; and accomplishment of the Promises pleaded. §. 4. The Church-State of Israel built upon this Covenant. §. 5. This proved : Circumcision the Door of Entrance into, and Boundary of, their Communion : and an Obligation to keep the whole Law. §. 6. Rom. 3. 1. proposed : How Levi payed Tythes in Abraham. §. 7. Israel brought out of Egypt and planted in Canaan by virtue of this Covenant : An

Objection prevented. §. 8. The second Proposition; Some of the immediate Seed excluded; proved from Gen. 17. 19, &c. An Objection answered. §. 9. The Instance of Esau insisted on: why so particular Mention made of Isaac and Jacob; Act. 7. 8. §. 10. An Objection, from the Application of the Seal of the Covenant, stated: Answer; 1. The express Testimony of Scripture removes it. 2. Abraham was bound to circumcise his Servants as well as his Children. 3. No Covenant-Interest, without Interest in the Promises of the Covenant; These not made to all that were circumcised. §. 11. Circumcision a Seal of the Covenant upon all, but not to all the Subjects thereof: This farther explained; The Command of God, not Covenant-Interest, the Rule of applying Circumcision. §. 12. Some Inferences from the Discourse foregoing. §. 13.

§. 1. **T**Hose Passages in Genesis that have been last discoursed of, give me an Occasion of Inlargement upon some things, which as they are deduced from the Texts that have been in part considered already; so the farther clearing and strengthening of them, will not only confirm

firm what hath been already hinted, but also contribute very much to the right Understanding of the *Nature* and *End* of this Covenant of Circumcision that I am treating of; and to a removal of the Grounds of many *mistaken Deductions* from it, by those that would from thence determine the right *Subjects of Baptism*.

What I intend, is summ'd up in these two Propositions;

1. "The *mediate and remote Seed* of that Line "to which the Promises of the Covenant of Circumcision did belong, were as fully included, and interested in them, as the *immediate Seed*."

2. "From the first establishing of this Covenant, some of the *immediate Seed of Abraham* "were excluded from Interest in it."

§. 2. I shall begin with the First: The Truth of which appears sufficiently in the *express Terms* of the Promises now given to *Abraham*, which run to him, and to *his Seed after him in their Generations*; and the Covenant it self is said to be an *everlasting Covenant*, which they are strictly commanded to keep *in their Generations*; Gen. 17. 7, 9, 13. These Terms are used, because it was a Covenant in force, as well for the Benefit of *more remote*, as *nearer Generations*; Its Promises did include, and its Law did equally bind both; during the whole State of the *Mosaical Oeconomy*.

The Right of the remotest Generation, was as much derived from *Abraham*, and the Covenant made with him, as that of his immediate Seed was; and did not at all depend upon the *Faithfulness of their immediate Parents*: And therefore the immediate Seed of those *Israelites* that fell in the Wilderness under the Displeasure of God, were made to inherit the Land of *Canaan*, by virtue of this Covenant with *Abraham*; who otherwise could never have enjoyed it by virtue of their *immediate Parents Stedfastness* in the Covenant.

§ 3. I suppose it cannot be denyed but *gross Idolatry*, was a manifest and full Breach of this Covenant, on the part of the *Idolster*; And yet when the *Israelites* in *Ezekiel's* time became guilty of the vilest Idolatries, the Lord still claims an Interest in their Children by virtue of this Covenant: *Ezek. 16. 20. 21. Moreover thou hast taken thy Sons and thy Daughters, whom thou hast born unto me, and these hast thou sacrificed unto them to be devoured: Is this of thy Whoredoms a small matter, that thou hast slain my Children, &c.* The Children of an *Apottatize Israelite* were God's as well as those of his faithful Servants; which could not have been, if their Covenant-Interest had been suspended on the good abearing of immediate Parents.

And to this agrees the Story that we have of *Mattathias* his proceeding in the Reformation of the

the Church in his day; who, finding that many had denied their God, and forsaken his true Worship, in that time of Persecution, did (according to the Law of *Moses*) execute Justice upon as many of the Apostates as he could lay Hands on, by slaying them; (as *Josephus* witnesseth) but the Children that he found to be left uncircumcised in this Time of Apostacy, he took and circumcised them: The Words of the Author in 1 *Maccab.* 2. 46. are, Καὶ περιέτεμον τὰ παιδάκια τὰ ἀπερίτμητα, ὅσα ἔυρον ἐν ὁρίοις ἰσραὴλ, ἐν ἰχϋῖ. This I know hath no farther Strength than of an *humane Testimony*; But it speaks fully what the sence of those Times was concerning the Covenant-Interest of Children; viz. That the Apostacy of their *immediate Parents* could not prejudice it, so as to render them incapable of Circumcision; which strongly concludes their Covenant-Right to be derived from *Abraham*, and not suspended upon *them*. And *Mattathias* who did this, was not only a Man zealous for the Law, but also one that may be presumed to have understood it better than many others, seeing he was a Priest.

§. 4. And not only the Passages before insisted on, but the whole Current of Scripture, where these things are mentioned, runs very smoothly this way; but especially that Phrase before touched [*thy Seed in their Generations*] will admit no other Sence; being by no means

capable of a restraint to the immediate Seed, but even as the like Expression *Gen. 9. 12.* secures *Noah's* Children from drowning, by the Waters of an universal Deluge, to the end of the World; so did this Promise give a Covenant-Interest to the Seed of *Abraham* till the times of Reformation.

We exclude not the immediate Seed, *viz. Isaac*, but the Promise passeth on much farther, and is to be fulfilled in *a Seed multiplied exceedingly*, and formed into *a Kingdom*, which it was not until *Isaac*, and his immediate Offspring also, were laid in the Dust.

Moreover; The Inheritance promised in the *Land of Canaan*, is given to *this Seed* for an *everlasting Possession*; which was fulfilled in their *successive inheriting* of it from Generation to Generation; therefore the Seed intended was such as should be propagated thro' many Generations, the last of which are as directly here spoken of as the first; Circumcision being to be observed by them (upon the account of the Promise, and Command now given) *for an everlasting Covenant*:
 " The Relation of the carnal Seed, to God, in an
 " external, typical Covenant; the Inheritance of
 " *Canaan* by virtue thereof; and the Seal of Cir-
 " cumcision; are all of one Date, and did all
 " expire together.

§. 5. That these things may be the better understood, we must farther observe,

" This

“ This Covenant of Circumcision was the
“ Foundation upon which the Church-State of
“ *Israel* after the Flesh was built.

I do not say, that their Church-State was
exactly, and *completely* formed by this Ordinance
alone; But this I intend; That in the Covenant
of Circumcision were contained the *first Rudiments*
of that in the *Wilderness*; and the latter
was the filling up, and completing of the former;
yea it was made with them in Pursuance of
it; and for the full Accomplishment of the
Promises now made to *Abraham*; And therefore
the Priviledge of the carnal Seed of *Abraham*
by virtue of the Covenant of Circumcision,
can rise no higher than the Advantage, and
Priviledg of a Jew, by virtue of the Covenant in
the *Wilderness*.

§. 6. For the Confirmation of this, I shall offer these things.

First, Circumcision was the *Entrance into*, and
Boundary of Communion in the Jewish Church;
and it was made so by the expresse Command of
God himself, who straightly enjoined, that who-
soever brake the Covenant by the neglect of
Circumcision; should be *cut off from his People*:
Gen. 17. 14. And as it was to them a *Gate of*
Priviledg, so was it no less a *Bond of Duty*;
not only obliging them to obey the Will of God
so far as it was now made known to *Abraham*;
but also, to the Observation of all those Laws
and

and Ordinances that were after delivered to them by *Moses*, when so delivered: For the circumcised Person was a *Debtor to keep the whole Law*: Gal. 5. 3. And this Obligation did result from its *proper Use and End*, in its *primitive Institution*; for we read not of its Appointment to any *new End* by *Moses*, nor of any *Use* it was assigned to, *de novo*, which it had not (at least virtually) from its *first Appointment*: It was from first to last, a *visible Character* upon this People as separated unto God from other Nations, and as such they made their Boast of it: And therefore it may be concluded to belong unto that Covenant, from which all their Rights, and Priviledges, as such a People, did spring; and where *the Sign* was not *varied*, there was no essential Variation, or *Change* in the Covenant it self.

§. 7. Secondly, All the Advantage, and Priviledg of *Israel* after the Flesh, is in the New Testament, expressly referred to the Covenant of Circumcision; For thus the Holy Ghost speaks by *Paul* Rom. 3. 1. *What Advantage then hath the Jew? Or what Profit is there of Circumcision?* You see these Phrases; [*The Advantage of the Jew*] and [*The Profit of Circumcision*] are set down as *Convertible*; they import the same thing; what belongs to the one, belongs to the other: And wherever Circumcision is mentioned in the New-Testament, it is spoken of as no less belonging

longing to the *Mosaical* Oeconomy (tho' the first Institution was not of *Moses*, but of the Fathers) than any other part of the Law first given by him; and boasting in Circumcision is esteemed a boasting in the *Flesh*, as much as boasting in any other Old-Testament Priviledg of the Jew; *Phil.* 3. From all which we may safely conclude, that the *Covenant of Circumcision* was of the same Kind with the *Levitical Covenant*, afterwards annexed to it, or rather built upon it, for the full accomplishing of its Design

I might also insist upon *Levi's* paying *Tithes* in *Abraham*; which could not have been reckoned to him, if he had not been in *Abraham* considered as an Head in some Covenant Transaction, wherein *Levi* was Covenanted for, by *Abraham*: Neither could this have been pleaded by the Apostle as it is in *Heb.* 7. 9, 10. if that Covenant in which the *Levitical* Priesthood was founded, and to which it did belong, had not been originally made with *Abraham*. But I pass this.

§. 8. Thirdly, The Scriptures do every where affirm, That the Lord brought up *Israel* out of *Egypt*, formed their Church-State by establishing the Order of his solemn Worship among them, and gave them the Land of *Canaan* in Possession, in Remembrance of his Covenant with *Abraham*; and for the fulfilling of the Promises thereof:

thereof: For Instance let these Places be well weighed; *Exod.* 2. 24, 25. *Deut.* 29. 10, — 13. *Neb.* 9. 7, 8, 9, &c. *Psal.* 78. with *Psal.* 105. And herein was he known to them by *his Name JEHOVAH*, as giving Being to his Promise in the actual Accomplishment of it, which their Fathers did depend upon *his Alſufficiency* for: *Conf.* *Exod.* 6. with *Gen.* 17. 1. Thus if we follow the Clue of Scripture in our Enquiries after the Original of the Covenant of Peculiarity made with *Israel* after the Fleſh, it will certainly guide us to that Covenant which *God* made with *Abraham* for his natural Offspring, and ſealed by Circumciſion. And yet that *Covenant of Peculiarity* is in the New Teſtament always ſtyled *Old*, and *Carnal*; a Covenant from which the *Gospel Covenant* is *distinguished*; and to which it is in many Reſpects *oppoſed*: See *Jer.* 31. 31, — 34. and *Heb.* 8. 8, — 13.

Neither doth there lye any juſt Exception againſt what hath been ſaid, from the *Inlargement* of the *Terms and Articles* of this Covenant in the *Conſummation* thereof in the *Wilderneſs*; for that will not in the leaſt infer any ſubſtantial Difference of this Covenant from the Covenant of Circumciſion; ſeeing it is no more than *God* hath done by the *Gospel*, with reſpect to the New-Covenant that was confirmed in *Chriſt* unto *Abraham*; which being firſt ſummed up in one Promise, *In thee ſhall all Nations be bleſſed*, was abundantly enlarged, cleared, filled up with
its

its own Ordinances, and made the intire Rule of the Church's Obedience, when the *Fulness of Time* came which that Promise had respect to; And yet the New Testament is not another Gospel differing from that preached to *Abraham*, or another Covenant differing from that before confirmed of God in Christ; In like manner the filling up of this Covenant of Circumcision was reserved to the time of God's performing what he now promised unto *Abraham*, without the least change of the Nature or Design of the Covenant it self.

§. 9. We come now to the second Proposition: viz. "That from the first Establishment of this Covenant, some of the immediate Seed of *Abraham* were excluded.

The Promises thereof did belong to *Isaac's Line* in their Generations, from Age to Age; but they did not appertain to the immediate Seed of *Abraham* by *Hagar* or by *Keturah*; Their extent being restrained by the express Caution of God himself, to whom it belonged to set the Bounds of this Covenant-Relation and Interest, and that in the very first making of the Covenant of Circumcision with *Abraham*: Read diligently *Gen. 17. 19, 20, 21. In Isaac shall thy Seed be called*; It was *Isaac's* Seed and not *Ishmael's* that the Lord would set apart for himself, and would give the Land of *Canaan* unto, and establish his solemn Worship among them, to be a God un-

to them. And yet *Abraham* was as much a Believer, and as much in Covenant with God, as to his personal Interest in the Covenant of Grace, when he begat the one as when he begat the other.

If it be objected, That *Ishmael* was at first included, and interested in the Covenant, but was afterwards rejected and cast out for his prophane mocking at *Isaac*: It will be answered;

That such a Supposition is against the express Words and Letter of the Text before urged. and the Limitation which God the Author of the Covenant made of its Promises therein; Before *Ishmael* was circumcised God declares that he gave not the Promises of his Covenant unto him, but to *Isaac* with whom it should be established: So that *Ishmael's* being cast out of *Abraham's* Family afterwards, will in no wise infer that till then he was in Covenant; but only thus much, That then it was made more manifest than ever, that the Covenant appertained not to him, and that he must be concluded under the Exception that was before laid in against him. And the divine Confirmation of what *Sarah* then required is grounded upon that Revelation of his Will that he now made unto *Abraham*; as will be evident to him that compares *Gen. 17.* with *Chap. 21. 12, 13.* *Cast out the Bond-Woman and her Son, For in Isaac shall thy Seed be called.* And therefore *Abraham* did after-

afterwards voluntarily send his Sons by *Keturah*, far away from *Isaac*, and from the promised Land: *Gen. 25. 1.* — 6. altho' these were guilty of no such Wickedness as *Ishmael* who mocked at *Isaac*; but for ought appears might be very holy and good Men, the true Children of *Abraham* by Faith, according to the Tenour of the Covenant of Grace; tho' they might not be Joynt-Heirs with *Isaac*, according to the Tenour of the Covenant of Circumcision.

§. 10. It is moreover to be observed; Notwithstanding the Covenant-Seed of *Abraham* was called in *Isaac*, and his immediate Children were only two Sons, *Esau* and *Jacob*; yet the Right of this Covenant-Blessing did not equally descend upon them both, but once more the Lord restrains it by the *Rejection of Esau* and *choosing of Jacob*, and that before the Children had done either good or evil; That the purpose of God according to Election might stand; and that he might here set before us an awful Type of his Sovereignty in the after Dispensation of the Grace of the Gospel: *Esau* (indeed) did afterwards by the profane selling of his Birth-right, and despising the Inheritance, render himself manifestly unworthy of the Blessing; but before this, God had declared that *Jacob* and his Seed, and not *Esau*, should inherit the Promises of this Covenant.

Conf. *Gen. 25. 23.*
with *Mal. 1. 2, &c.*
Rom. 9. 10, — 13.

And

And possibly it may be from hence that *Isaac* and *Jacob* are so particularly mentioned *Act. 7. 8.* because of the *special Limitation* of the Promises to them; and because they were *the Seed* brought forth in the virtue of the Promise given to *Abraham*.

§. 11. Thus plain do these thing lye before us in the History of the Scripture, That they will hardly be called into Question, if our minds be not prepossess'd with some particular Notion unto which they are not suited: But it is earnestly pleaded by some, "That all the immediate Seed of *Abraham* were interested in this Covenant, and that the first Right in its Promise, did belong unto them; inasmuch as the Seal of the Covenant was applyed to them all, in their Circumcision; the doing of which must be absurd, and useles, if they had not been Parties in that Covenant unto which this Seal did belong. To this, I answer:

1. It is no way meet our uncertain Conjectures, or Inferences, should be opposed to the expresse Testimony of God himself; or that his Wisdom should be called into Question upon their Account: Now tho' God laid his Command upon *Abraham* to circumcise *Ishmael*, yet at the same time he tells him that his Covenant should be established with *Isaac*, excluding *Ishmael*; unto whom he will not grant (tho' by *Abraham* interceded for) a Joynt-Interest with *Isaac*

Isaac in this Covenant; but dismisseth his Claim, and lays out his Portion by himself, in another inferior Blessing.

2. *Abraham* was as strictly bound to circumcise *all the Males* in his Family, that were bought with his Money of the Stranger, that was not of his Seed, and the Children of those Bond-Servants, that were born in his House, as he was his own Children, *Gen. 17. 12, 13*. And this Obligation remained upon the Heirs of his Covenant in their Generations; And yet none of these Servants (no nor yet *Ishmael*) were hereby made Parties in the Covenant, so as that the Promises of it should be sealed unto them, by Circumcision, as their own Inheritance: And,

3. To suppose an Interest in the Covenant, without a Right to the Promises thereof, is to introduce a meer Chimera or Fancy, instead of a real Covenant-Interest: Now the Promises of this Covenant are, that God will give unto the Seed of *Abraham*, called in *Isaac*, the Land of *Canaan* for an everlasting Possession; and that he will be a God to them in their Generations, and they shall be a peculiar People unto him; And can we suppose that these Promises did belong to *Ishmael*, and to the Bond-Servants in *Abraham's* Family? or were they ever made good to them? If not; seeing the Performance of these Promises was the fulfilling of the Covenant on God's part, whose Faithfulness is to all Generations, we must conclude they never had

the Grant of them, or an Interest in them: And if the Promises of the Covenant did not belong to them, then were they not Parties in Covenant: and if not in Covenant; then they were not circumcised upon the account of their own Covenant-Interest, but in obedience to the particular, and *positive Command* of God.

§. 12. It appears therefore, from what hath been already said; that Circumcision was a Seal of the Covenant *upon all*, but not *to all*, that were circumcised; it was a Seal of the Covenant *unto the Children of the Covenant*, and gave them *admission* to all the Blessings promised therein; but it did not make their *Slaves* free of the Commonwealth of *Israel*, nor was it given for their sakes; And if they could not claim the *outward Privilege* of an *Israelite* thereby, it will hardly be granted that singly upon the account of their being bought by a Jew (tho' their Master himself, perhaps, had no Interest in the Covenant of Grace) they should be made the Subjects of a New Covenant-Blessing; and that, whether they knew, or were capable of consenting to the Terms of that Covenant, or not; For that might be the Case of many of them, seeing the Law concerned such as were purchased in their Infancy, as well as those of riper Years; As well the one as the other *must needs be circumcised*, because of the Command given to his Master. Perhaps this might belong to the typical Holiness of the Family of an *Israelite*;

Israelite; but whether we can fully understand the Reason of it or not; it sufficeth, that the wise God ordained it so to be. However this is certain, that it was the *positive Command of God*, and not simply *Covenant-Interest*, that was the Rule according to which Circumcision was administered, and by which, both the Subjects, and Circumstances of it, were determined: And so must it be in all things of like Nature; For in Matters of *positive Right*, we can have no Warrant for our Practice but from a *positive Precept*: For things of this kind fall not within the compass of *Common Light*, or general Principles of natural Religion; but have their Original from, a *particular, distinct, and independent Will of the Law-giver*: And therefore Inferences built upon general Notions may soon lead us into Mistakes about them; it upon such Inferences we form a *Rule* to our selves of *larger Extent* than the *express Words of the Institution* do warrant.

§. 13. The Propositions laid down, being thus far explained and confirmed; I shall draw to a close of this Chapter with an Inference or two, grounded upon the foregoing Discourse.

1. He that holds himself obliged by the *Command*, and interested in the *Promises* of the *Covenant of Circumcision*, is *equally concerned in the whole of them*; seeing they together are that *Covenant*; And therefore (omitting now to speak of the *Yoke of the Law* belonging thereunto) he that

will apply one Promise or Branch of this Covenant to the carnal Seed of a believing Parent (esteeming every such Parent to have an Interest in the Covenant coordinate with *Abraham's*) ought seriously to consider *the whole promissory Part* of the Covenant, in the true Import and Extent thereof; and see whether he can make such an *Application of it together*, without manifest Absurdity; For, (to pass by other things) If I may conclude my Concern in this Covenant to be such as that by one Promise thereof I am assured, That God hath taken my immediate Seed into Covenant with himself, I must on the same ground conclude also, that my Seed in remote Generations shall be no less in Covenant with him, seeing the Promise runs to *the Seed in their Generations*; yea, and that this Seed shall be separated from other Nations as a *peculiar People* unto God, and shall have the *Land of Canaan for an everlasting Possession*; seeing all these things are included in the Covenant of Circumcision: But inasmuch as these things cannot be allowed, nor are by any that I know of pleaded for; we must conclude, That *Abraham* was considered in this Covenant, not in the Capacity or Respect, of a *private believing Parent*, but of one chosen of God, to be *the Father of, and a Federal Root unto a Nation*, that for special Ends should be separated unto God by a *peculiar Covenant*: And when those Ends are accomplished, the Covenant it self by which they obtained that Right,
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and Relation, must cease; And the like cannot be pleaded for by any other, without a reviving of the whole Oeconomy built thereupon.

2. Their Notion, who assert this Covenant-Interest, to be the *Basis* of such a foederal Holiness of Believers Children under the New-Testament, as gives them a Right to *Baptism*, doth moreover labour under these Inconveniencies.

1. They generally straiten the Terms of Covenant-Interest (if we consider it as derived upon *Isaac's* Line) by restraining it to the immediate Offspring, which in this Covenant was not so restrained, but came as fully upon remote Generations; and also by excluding the Servants and Slaves of Christians, with the Children born of them, from that Priviledg which they suppose them to have enjoyed under the Old-Testament, in being sealed with the Sign or Token of the Covenant of Grace. But then;

2. On the other hand (according to what hath been already proved) they make a Believer's Interest in this Covenant of larger Extent, than ever *Abraham's* was in Truth; For they will have *all* the immediate Seed of Believers to be included in it; whereas we see, of all the Sons of *Abraham* according to the Flesh, but *one only Isaac* was admitted to the Inheritance of the Blessing, and Promises of this Covenant.

Of the Covenant of Circumcision.

CHAP. VII.

The great Promise, Gen. 17. 7, 8. proposed, in order to a more strict Enquiry into the proper meaning, and extent thereof: What some collect from it. §. 1. Several things are premised in order to a right Understanding of it. §. 2. Israel to be considered in a twofold Respect under the Mosaical Oeconomy; 1. As the whole Body of the People was constituted in a typical Church-state. 2. As many of them were by Faith, Members of the spiritual Church. §. 3. The Israel of God in Israel, remained under the Law till Christ came: Tho' they obtained eternal Life in Circumcision, and under the Law, yet not by Circumcision, nor by the Law: The Promise inquired into belongs to the Jewish Church; and was fulfilled to the Body of that People. §. 4. The Promise fully opened; It was an Engagement of God to make good the Covenant: It gives no particular Good beyond what is contained

in particular Promises. §. 5. The sense given, farther confirmed; This Promise added both to the Old Covenant, and the New: No proof that the Covenant of Circumcision was the Covenant of Grace deducible from it. §. 6. A brief view of the History of its Accomplishment to Israel. §. 7. All the Blessings of Israel after the Flesh, as such, fall short of the Blessings of the New-Covenant: The first Tender of the Gospel belonged to the Jews; Act. 2. 38, 39. opened. §. 8. The Covenant of Circumcision was not that Covenant of Grace, which God brings all the Elect into; nor immediately a Covenant of spiritual Blessings: The solemn Worship of God not presently confined to Abraham's Family thereby. §. 9. The Patriarchs, and other holy Men then living, were not bound to be circumcised, tho' interested in the Covenant of Grace as well as Abraham; The Consequence hereof. §. 10. The Question about Infants Church-membership considered. §. 11. Five things proposed in order to the clearing of it: No Argument for Pædo-Baptism can be taken from thence. §. 12.

§. 1. **I**T will be expedient, in the next Place, more fully to search out the reasons containing,

and extent of *that great Promise* in the Covenant^t of Circumcision, which was before but briefly touched upon; *viz. I will establish my Covenant — to be a God unto thee, and to thy Seed after thee.* Gen. 17. 7. And again, The Promise of Canaan to Israel for an everlasting Possession, is backed with the same Assurance; *and I will be their God;* v. 8. This Enquiry is the more necessary, because many conceive, That the *intire Blessing* of the *New-Covenant* is comprehended in these words; seeing the like Promise is given forth as the Summary and Assurance of *that Covenant* in Jer. 31. and Heb. 8. And hereupon they conclude it is *the Covenant of Grace* that God is now making with *Abraham*, and which he sealed with Circumcision; and that spiritual Blessings are thereby directly bequeathed to him both for himself, and his Seed; and consequently, it was no other than *Interest* in the Grace and Promise of the *New-Covenant*, that was sealed to his *Infant Seed* by Circumcision.

This Notion militates against diverse things that have been before pointed at in the Account we have given of *this Transaction*; But I conceive, upon a more thorough Disquisition, it will be found without sufficient Strength to shake those Principles that are already laid down, and must yet be built upon, in the Progress of our Discourse; In order therefore to free you from any Intanglement by Objections raised from hence; I shall proceed gradually, to the Solution of the doubt moved.

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§. 2. And, that I may not be misunderstood in what is to follow, I shall prepare my way by offering these things to serious Thoughts:

1. A considerable time before this Transaction recorded *Gen. 17.* the Covenant of Grace was by God confirmed unto *Abraham* in Christ Jesus; and that not only in the Capacity of a *private Believer*; but as one bearing the *Relation of a Father to all Believers*: And *this Relation* is peculiar to himself; none can claim a Partnership with him therein.

2. In the establishment of this Covenant, there was a *Seed promised* unto him, that should certainly inherit the spiritual and eternal Blessings thereof; for *the Promise was sure unto all the Seed*: But this was a *Seed of Believers* collected out of all Nations, and united to Christ by Faith, and not *the Children of Abraham* according to *the Flesh*; as is manifest almost in every Page of the New-Testament. And,

3. It hath been moreover proved, That God did choose *Abraham* to be the Root, and Father of a typical People, even of a Nation, the whole Body of which he would take into a *peculiar Relation, and Nearness* to himself; and upon whom he would bestow many great Favours and Privileges, until *the fulness of Time* came for the bringing forth of *that Seed* unto which the Promises of the New-Covenant did eminently appertain.

4. One great End of this Separation of *Abraham* and his Seed by *Isaac* from all other Families

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in the Earth, was *the bringing forth of the Messiah* in his Line, and the evident Accomplishment of *the great and first Promise* therein: This was a Priviledg that *Abraham* had in the Flesh, and his Seed derived from him; That they were set apart as a *special Channel*, thro' which the promised Seed should be derived and brought forth into the World: *Rom. 9. 4, 5.* And therefore;

5. On this account their Priviledg, and *Covenant-state* was secured unto

See Dr. Owen's
Exercitations on the
Heb. Vol. 1.

them, so as they could never be *utterly divested* of it in their Generations; until the great

End of it was accomplished by the *Messiah's* being come in the Flesh: And that then it was to cease, the Nature of the thing it self sufficiently demonstrateth, in that it was now brought to the *limited Time, and End*, appointed to it: And hereupon all the carnal Priviledges, and Ordinances of Worship suited to that State, did necessarily cease and become uselefs also.

6. During the time wherein *their Covenant* retained its *full Vigor*, and all their carnal Priviledges remained good to them *in their utmost extent*, all their Advantage *lay short of Interest in the Covenant of Grace*; This they could never claim by virtue of a carnal Descent from *Abraham*: *Mat. 3. 9.* For it was not a carnal Relation to *Abraham*, but *walking in the steps of his Faith*, that alone could interest them in this Covenant, and the Blessings thereof: This the Apostle professedly discourses in

in *Rom. 4.* and many other places: So then,

§. 3. 7. The carnal, and the spiritual Seed, as also the *Covenants* wherein their respective *Priviledges* are stated, were from the Beginning, in their own Nature, distinct the one from the other; Altho', during the *Minority of the Church*, under the *Mosaical Oeconomy*, these different Blessings did *ordinarily meet* in the same *Subjects*: For in that time the Seed of *Abraham* after the *Flesh* comes under a twofold Consideration.

1. The whole Body of them is to be considered as a People separated unto God for the Ends before mentioned, and formed into a *typical State* by the Law of *Moses*, vested with *carnal Priviledges*, and having an earthly Inheritance; which things were typical of spiritual Blessings under the Gospel.

2. As a great number of them were made the true and real Members of the spiritual Church, and Assembly of the redeemed of the Lord, who did by Faith inherit and enjoy these spiritual Blessings, which the outward Priviledge of the carnal Jew, was but a shadow of: For that Nation was so made a *typical Church*; as that they were also the *only true visible Church* that God then had in the World: And therefore while the Wall of Separation stood betwixt them and the Gentiles, the Oracles of God were committed to them, and his true Worship was settled among them; the *Covenants of Promise* were given to them, and the way of Salvation by a Covenant of Grace, thro'

thro' the promised Seed, was made known (tho' but darkly) among them; and the Blood of God's *special Eleēt* did generally run in their Veines; that People who were savingly interested in God, and truly holy, being, for the most part found amongst them, while the Gentiles lived *without God in the World*: (Thus, I say, it was *ordinarily*; for even then the Grace of God might superabound to some few among the Gentiles) And therefore that Church that was *really*, and not only *typically*, *Holiness to the Lord*, was found within the Compass of *their Enclosure*: Thus as *Isaac* was not only a *Type* of the *Children of Promise* in the New-Testament, but was also *one of them* that did by Faith truly inherit the spiritual Blessing of *Abraham*; and *Jacob* was not only a *Type of the Eleēt Seed*, but also a *real Part* thereof; so the like may be said of all that came after of the *Circumcision*, *who were not of the Circumcision only*; but, *did also walk in the Steps of the Faith of their Father Abraham, which he had, being yet uncircumcised*; They were in one respect a *Type*, and in another, *true Members*, of the *general Assembly and Church of the First-borne*: Tho' the one of these they found as pertaining to the *Flesh*; the other, they obtained by *Faith*.

§. 4. And, of this *Israel in Israel*, two things are to be observed;

1. That notwithstanding their Interest in the Promise by Faith, they were not freed from the Yoke

Yoke and Discipline of *Moses* his Law, until Christ came : They were indeed, *Children*, even the Children of *Abraham* on a spiritual Account ; and by the Grace of a free Promise, which the Law could not disannul, they were relieved from its Rigor, as to their spiritual and eternal State ; but being *Children under Age*, the *Pedagogy* they were under, *differed nothing from that of Servants* ; neither could they be discharged of *this School-Master* before Christ came.

2. They were blessed with spiritual Blessings, and had Interest in eternal Life, *in Circumcision and under the Law* ; but none of them obtained this *by Circumcision, or by the Law* : That whole Oeconomy that *Israel* after the Flesh was under, was, *in, and by, it self insufficient and weak* as to the End of eternal Happiness, and the Justification of a Sinner before God, in order thereto : It could not *make the Comers thereunto perfect* ; nor make the carnal Seed Heirs of spiritual Blessings ; But a Right to them was evermore grounded upon a spiritual Relation to *Abraham*, and Interest in *that Promise* which the Covenant of Circumcision was but an Hand-maid to : And therefore those that *rested in their carnal Priviledges*, and sought eternal Happiness from them, did pervert their true End, and could never obtain what they followed after.

Lastly, To conclude ; The Covenant of Circumcision did belong to the Body of the carnal Seed, even to the Jewish Church ; The Foundation of their State is laid therein, and their Right
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and Priviledg is thereby exprefly ftated, in *their Generations*; And therefore, as we readily grant the Promife, now under confideration, to belong to the Seed of *Abraham* after the Flefh; fo we do with good Reafon affirm, that it muft be taken in fuch a fence as we may find verified in that People and Nation, unto whom it did belong; and that fhall no ways contradict, or interfere with, the general Defign of the Gospel, or the plain and indisputable Sence of other Texts of Scripture.

§. 5. Thefe things being premifed, we fhall now come more clofe to the Words themfelves, and enquire *what that Good, and Bleffing is*, which by them is *ensured unto this Seed of Abraham*.

That this Promife, *I will be their God*; with that foregoing in Gen 17.7. do give a general Affurance of *some Good* to the People in Covenant, is evident; but that they are Promifes of *some particular Good, or Bleffing*, that is of an higher Nature then is comprehended in *any other Promifes* of the Covenant, is not to be fupposed; For, the true Import of this general Promife is; “That God hath ingaged himfelf, and all the “Properties of his Nature, for the exact fulfilling “of all the Promifes of the Covenant now made “with them, according to the true Tenor, and “Conditions of the faid Co-
 venant. All the *divine Per-
 fections* are laid in as *Pledges*,
 that

See Mr. Whift.
 Prim. Doctr. p. 124.

that the Promises shall not fail on God's Part ; seeing as need requires they shall be *all exerted* for the Good and Advantage of this People in fulfilling the Promises given to them : But still these Communications of God to them, and Actings for them, both in respect of the Blessings he will bestow, as also the Terms and Conditions on which they shall be bestowed, are limited by the Covenant he hath made with them, and the Nature, and Extent of the Promises thereof.

And this will more plainly appear to be the true Sence, if we duly weigh *the Terms* of the Promise enquired into ; (*I will be their God, i. e. a God to them* ; They shall have Interest in all the Perfections of my Nature) For,

Either God is obliged by this Promise to communicate himself, in the highest Degree possible to all those to whom it is made, and to do the utmost for them that may be done, without implying a Contradiction to his Being, and the infinite Perfections thereof, and so to bring them absolutely to the utmost Degree of Happiness, that omnipotent Goodness can raise them to ; or else the Good promised must fall under some particular Limitation : If it fall under any Limitation ; (as certainly it doth) Those Bounds must be set, either by the Import of the Terms in which the Promise is made, as considered absolutely, and by themselves ; or some other way : The first cannot be affirmed, for *the Terms* are general, and indeterminate ; Therefore it is some other

other way to be limited ; and that must be by *the particular Promises, and Conditions* of that Covenant, unto which this general Promise doth belong ; And if so, then there is not, nor can be, any *greater Good* promised thereby, then what the Nature of that Covenant admits of, and its particular Promises give a Right in, to them that are Parties concerned.

“ And these things being so ; None can from
“ hence prove a Grant of spiritual Blessings to,
“ nor yet a Right in Gospel Ordinances for, the
“ carnal Seed of *Abraham*, or of any Believer, as
“ such ; unless he could produce a particular Pro-
“ mise which did contain such a Grant, or give
“ such a Right, unto them.

§. 6. So then, That which is principally intended, and fully express'd in this Ingagement, is no more than the *necessary Result of any Covenant-Transaction* of God with Men ; For where his *Truth* is once engaged in a Promise, there *all the Properties of his Nature* are engaged respectively, for the making good of that Promise : And therefore, Such a Promise as in its own Nature, contains no more, than a *general Assurance* of any *Covenant* that God makes with Men, cannot by it self be the *distinguishing Character* of any one Covenant, in Opposition to, or Contradistinction from, another ; neither doth it determine of *what kind* the promised Blessings are, or *the way wherein* they shall be enjoyed.

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And hence it is that you find this Promise, equally and indifferently annexed both to the *Old Covenant* and the *New*; the *Covenant of Works* and that of *Grace*: The Truth of this will be manifest by a diligent Conference of *Heb. 8.* with *Jer. 31.* and this with *Gen. 17.* and *Exod. 6. 7.* and *Deut. 26. 17, 18.* There is no Reason therefore to conclude, Because we find this Promise in the *Covenant of Grace*, every Covenant in which it is found, must be of the *same Nature*, for the Covenant is not *measured by this Promise*; but *è contra*, its special Import, is *limited by the Covenant* to which it belongs.

§. 7. Thus far I have indeavoured to set before you the *Genuine Sence*, and true Interpretation of this *great Promise* in the *Covenant of Circumcision*, and to give you *the Reasons* by which it is confirmed; And it may add some farther Light to what hath been said, briefly to represent the History of its Accomplishment, from the holy Scriptures, which take, as followeth.

The Lord did abundantly bless *Abraham, Isaac,* and *Jacob*, and guided them with his Eye in all their Peregrinations from Nation to Nation, and from one Kingdom to another People; and when he brake the whole Staff of Bread in the Land of *Canaan*, and the adjacent Countrys, he made Provision, by a wonderful Series of Providences, for the Sustainment of *Jacob's Family*, by sending *Joseph* before them into the Land of *Egypt*, and

for their Sakes raising him unto a Capacity, not only to secure them from Want, but also to preserve the Lives of thousands more: And when the House of *Jacob* was by this means brought into the Land of *Egypt*, the Lord was with them there; and when the time of the Promise drew nigh, he caused them to increase and multiply exceedingly; and tho' the *Egyptians* sought by all means to oppress them, and dealt subtilly with them, yet by all their Artifice and Cruelty they could make no Earnings of their Work, for the more they oppressed them, the more they grew: And in the midst of their calamitous Distress *Moses* was brought forth, whom the Lord had designed for a Deliverer and a Saviour unto them; and in order thereunto he was preserved in a miraculous manner from all Dangers and Temptations, from his Birth to the time that he was sent about his great Work. And in the time when the Bondage of *Israel* grew to its Extremity, the Lord's Eye was still open upon them, and he heard their Cry, and remembered his Covenant with their Fathers, and sent *Moses* and *Aaron* to deliver them; Then was his Bowe made quite naked, Hab. 3. 9. in a Course of Miracles, by Signs, and Wonders, and mighty Works, for which his Name is celebrated unto all Generations; and in that very day which he had set in the Promise to their Fathers, he brought them out of the Land of *Egypt*, and delivered them from the House of their Bondage: with an high Hand; yea he divided the

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Red-Sea before them, and led them thro' the Deep as on dry Land, but buried *Pharaoh* and all his Host in the same Waters that had been as a Wall on the Right-hand and on the Left, while the redeemed of the Lord passed over: He guided them also in the Wilderness, and afforded the visible Token of his Presence with them, *in a Pillar of Cloud by Day, and of Fire by Night*: From his Right-hand there went forth a fiery Law for them, because he loved them, by which he formed both their Civil, and Ecclesiastical Polity; wherein they were immediately subjected to himself, and made a Kingdom of Priests and an holy Nation; and the Lords Tabernacle was pitched in the midst of them, so that there was no Nation under Heaven that had God so nigh, as the Lord their God was unto them in all that they did call upon him for. Moreover he gave his good Spirit to instruct them, which was poured upon *Moses*, *Aaron*, and *Miriam*, with the seventy Elders, and those Prophets which from time to time, God raised up among them: He fed them also with Manna from Heaven, and gave them Water out of the Rock to drink; and all the time of their forty Years Travel in the Wilderness, their Feet were not swollen, neither did their Garments wax old: He dried up *Jordan* also, and brought them into the Land of *Canaan*, and drove out before them Nations more in number, and mightier than they; and there he blessed them with the Blessings of Heaven

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above, and of the Earth beneath ; so that there failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken concerning them ; Josh. 23. 14. but their State was made prosperous and happy, because the Lord was their God ; Psal. 144. ult. And notwithstanding all their Provocations, he had Compassion upon them, when in their Distresses they cryed unto him ; and delivered them, so that the Scepter did not depart from Judah, nor a Law-giver from between his Feet untill Shiloh (i. e. Christ) came. Much of this you have summ'd up in Neh. 9. Psal. 105 and Psal. 144. with Act. 7.

§. 8. In all these Respects (with others of like Nature before insisted on) there was a Glory, 2 Cor. 3. 7, — 11. upon the Ministration of the Old Testament ; The Jew had a great Advantage, and there was Profit of Circumcision ; but chiefly in that to them were committed the Oracles of God ; Rom. 3. 1. and Chap. 9. 4. Their's were the Covenants of Promise ; and the solemn Worship of God was maintained among them ; For Salvation was of the Jews ; Joh. 4. 22. and in these things was

this Promise fulfilled, *That the Lord would be a God to them in their Generations ;* And yet all this lies short of an actual, personal, and saving Interest

Many to whom the Lord was a God according to the Tenor of the Old Covenant, dyed in their Sins, and were eternally lost ; but those to whom he is a God, according to the Tenor of the New Covenant, receive from him, the Blessings of a new Heart, Remission of Sins, and eternal Salvation.

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in the Covenant of Grace; as the Apostle Paul argues at large in his *Epistle* to the *Romans*, and particularly in *Chap. 9, 10, 11*. Neither could he have affirmed that the committing of the Oracles of God to them was the *chief Profit* or greatest Benefit of Circumcision, if ever God had appointed it to be *the Seal of their Interest in the Covenant of Grace*; which undoubtedly is much greater than any *external Benefit* or Advantage: But moreover,

This Priviledg the Jews had, That as the Son of God was to be made Flesh of the Seed of *Abraham*; and to be *manifested* among them, being made a *Minister of the Circumcision* for the *fulfilling of the Promises made unto the Fathers*: *Rom. 15. 8.* so also, the *first Tender* of the Grace, and Salvation of the Gospel, did of Right belong unto them: The preaching of Repentance and Remission of Sins in Christ's Name was to begin at *Jerusalem*: *Luk. 24. 47.* And as this was an Argument of God's great Favour, so it might be unto them a great Incouragement to receive the Gospel, and expect Salvation by Christ according to the Tender made therein; And for this End is it urged by Peter, *Act. 2. 38, 39.* *Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the Name of Jesus Christ for the Remission of Sins, and Ye shall receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost. For the Promise is to you and to your Children, &c.* The Promise which he hath a particular Respect to, is that before cited, of the Salvation of all who in the day of the Gospel

call upon the Name of the Lord, and the *pouring out of his Spirit upon all Flesh, &c.* see ver. 17, 21. (The Promise of the Spirit is also mentioned by Paul, as the great Blessing of the Gospel Gal. 3. 14.) The Spirit was then to be poured out upon many in the miraculous and extraordinary Gifts thereof; and upon all true Believers in a New-Testament Measure; accordingly the Apostle exhorts them to the Obedience of the Gospel, that they might obtain the Remission of their Sins, and receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost; which he assures them of, upon the Terms proposed, *For (saith he) the Promise is to you, and your Children:* You are in no wise excluded from the Hope of this Blessing, tho' you have been the Betrayers and Murtherers of Christ himself; but on the contrary, you (as Jews) have a special Interest in the Promise, so far as that its Accomplishment is to be begun among you, and the first Offer of its Blessing belongs to you; An actual Interest in the Promise unto Salvation, they could not have until they believed, and repented; but as before explained, the *Promise* was *to them* while Unbelievers; and in a like sense the, the Apostle Paul saith of them, That the *Covenants*, and the *Promises* (as well as the *giving of the Law, and Levitical Service*) were *theirs* Rom. 9. 4. Their Covenant brought *Salvation* to them; but it was the receiving of it by Faith, when so tendered, that gave them particular Interest in it. And the Interest of *their Children*,
or

or Posterity, in the Promises, can reach no farther then their's, from whom it is supposed to be derived. And it is the same thing in Effect, that Peter urgeth upon the same People, to perswade their Obedience to the Doctrine of Christ, *Act. 3. 25, 26. Ye are the Children of the Prophets, and of the Covenant which God made with our Fathers, saying unto Abraham, and in thy Seed shall all the Kindreds of the Earth be blessed. Unto you first, God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning every one of you from his Iniquities.*

And suitable hereunto, we find the Apostles in all Places, where they came with the glad Tydings of the Gospel, first applyed themselves unto the Jews; as holding it necessary that the Word of God should first be preached unto them, *Act. 13. 46, 47.*

§. 9. From that Account which hath been given of the Covenant of Circumcision, the Nature, and Promises thereof; these Corolaries do follow;

1. That this was a Covenant of Grace and Mercy, as having its Original from the meer Goodness, and undeserved Favour of God towards Israel, *Deut. 7. 7, 8.* whereby many excellent Priviledges were given to them, which no other Nation under Heaven had a Right in, but themselves; and these were conferred on them in Pursuance of the great Design of God's Grace in the Covenant of Redemption by Christ: Yet

was it not *that Covenant of Grace*, which God made with *Abraham* for all his spiritual Seed, which was before confirmed of God in Christ, and thro' which *all Nations* (that is, true Believers in every Nation) have been ever since, now are, and shall be, *blessed* with the spiritual and eternal Blessing of *Abraham*.

2. Altho' it be granted, This Covenant had ultimately a respect to spiritual Blessings, as it was disposed in the manifold Wisdom of God in a *Subserviency* to the Covenant of Grace, and as *added to the Promise* until the fulness of Time came; yet was it not *immediately and directly*, a Covenant of spiritual Blessings, nor could it ever convey to the carnal Seed of *Abraham*, as such, a Right, and Interest in them.

3. Notwithstanding the Promises made in this Covenant of Circumcision, and the Separation of *Israel* to be the peculiar People of God, in Pursuance of them, whose Church-state was compleated by the Covenant in the Wilderness, when the set Time for the fulfilling of those Promises in that respect was fully come; Yet for the present this Covenant did not confine the solemn Worship of God (by Sacrifices or otherwise) to *Abraham's Family*; nor were *other baly Men* then living, under any Obligation to *incorporate themselves* thereinto, by *Circumcision*, or at all to take upon them that *Sign or Seal* of this *Covenant of Peculiarity* that God now made with *Abraham*; which yet without doubt they should have done.

if

if in its first Institution it had been given simply, and directly, as a *Seal of the Covenant of Grace*; for then by reason of their Interest in that Covenant, both in point of Duty, and Priviledg, it had equally belonged unto them, as to the Seed and Family of *Abraham*.

§. 10. But, from the sacred History it is evident, That the Command by virtue of which Circumcision was administered, extended no farther than to *Abraham*, and his Family; And therefore we have no ground to conclude, that *Lot* (tho' nearly allyed to *Abraham*) was circumcised, seeing there is nothing in the Command of God, or first Institution of Circumcision that obliged him thereunto, or interested him therein; and yet there is no Doubt to be made of his Interest in the Covenant of Grace: Neither was *Lot* the only righteous Man then living in the World, besides those of *Abraham's* Family; for of the Patriarchs, *Heber*, *Salah*, and *Shem* were now living; and as they had their distinct Families, and Interests, so there is no Question but the pure Worship of God was maintained in them; and they promoted the Interest of true Religion to the utmost of their Power while they lived; Yea *Melchisedeck* was in Being about this time (whether he was *Shem* before named, or another, it concerns not us to inquire, much less to determine; but this is certain that it was he) who was the Priest of the most high God, and King of Salem,
and

and in both these respects the most eminent Type of Jesus Christ that ever was in the World; a Person greater than *Abraham*, for *Abraham* paid Tythes to him, and was blessed by him; Now considering that he was both King and Priest, there is no doubt but there was a *Society of Men* that were ruled by him, and for whom he ministered; for a Priest is *ordained for Men* in things pertaining to God; and this *Society* was at this time, as much a *Church of God* as *Abraham's* Family was, and as truly interessed in the Covenant of Grace as any therein; yet were they not concerned as Parties in this Covenant of Circumcision, nor to be *signed* thereby; And hence it is manifest, that *Circumcision* was not at first applied as a *Seal of the Covenant of Grace*, nor did an Interest therein presently render a Man the proper Subject of it.

Again; To suppose that all good Men then living, should have been circumcised, as *Abraham* was, and their Offspring bound to keep this Covenant in their Generations, as his were, would necessarily frustrate one great (if not the greatest) End of Circumcision, and the Covenant thereof, which was the separating of one Family, and People from all others in the World, for the bringing forth of the *Messiah, that promised Seed*, of them, and among them, for the establishing of all the Promises made unto the Fathers. And moreover the Promise of this Covenant touching the Inheritance of the Land of *Canaan* could never

never have been made good to them all; And yet certainly the sealing of that Promise, was one thing intended in Circumcision. From the whole it appears;

“That as on the one hand, there was a positive Command which made it necessary to circumcise many that never had Interest in the Covenant of Grace; so, on the other hand, from the first Date of Circumcision there were many truly interested in the Covenant of Grace, who were under no Obligation to be circumcised. So far it is from Truth that a *New-Covenant-Interest*, and *Right to Circumcision*, may be inferred the one from the other.

§. 11. I should here have put a close to this Chapter; but that I judg it may be convenient in this place, briefly to touch upon that Notion of *Infant's Church-membership*, which is much spoken of with Reference to those Times, the History of which we have already past thro'; And the rather, because of the Light we may receive from the things already discoursed, to guide us to a right Understanding of the true State of the Question about it; By many *such a thing* is affirmed to have been *from the Beginning*, and great Weight is laid upon it in the Controversie about the right Subjects of Baptism; It being judg'd to afford a sufficient ground for applying the Seal of the Covenant to the Infant Seed of Believers. For my own part I find not in the Scriptures

tures Occasion given for any long Discourses about it; and I shall not desire to be *wise above what is written*; And therefore I shall endeavour in few Words to represent some things groundd upon the records of matter of Fact, in the Scripture, which I conceive may be sufficient to determine our Thoughts, as to the Issue of our present Enquiry about it. And they are these that follow :

§. 12. First; The term *Church* in the Scriptures is not (that I find) applyed to any *particular Society of Men* united in one Body, in order to the maintaining of the publick and solemn Worship of God among themselves; before the Children of *Israel* were compleately formed into a Church-state, by the Covenant that God made with them in the Wilderness; They are called *the Church in the Wilderness*, Act. 7. 38. Yet I doubt not but *all good Men* before that time did belong to that *general Assembly*, and *Church* which Christ hath redeemed with his Blood, and made the Members of his Body; and I grant that we may (using the Term in a more laxe sence) call any *Family* or *Society of Men* truly worshipping God, a *Church of God*. Nevertheless, if we consider the Circumstances relating to the different State of things in those different Times, it will appear, that *no Society* before the Jewish Church was formed, can be called a *Church* in so strict, and proper a sence

sece as they might ; for no other were *so formed into a Church-state* as they were.

2. Before *Abraham's* time, there was *no Institution of an outward Sign, or, Seal of any Covenant* to be applyed either to Infants or adult Persons ; And therefore there could be no *Inauguration* of this kind, or *solemn Right of Initiation to Church Priviledg* then in Use among them. All that can be said of the Children born in those Families and Societies, must issue in things of another Nature : *viz.* That they were under a more special and gracious Providence of God than others, as being Members of a Family peculiarly interested therein : They had also the Benefit of continual Prayers for them, and the Advantage of early and diligent Instruction, being brought up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord ; and so preserved from many Snares and Temptations that others are liable to, by the Discipline they were under ; And being provoked to Religion by the pious and holy Example of those they conversed with ; as soon they were capable of it (if, when grown up, they did not break thro' all these Fences, and revolt to a wicked and irreligious Life) they *actually joyned* with that Family and Society to which they belonged, in the solemn Worship of God.

3. If we consider *Church-membership* in such a Notion of it as will agree to that time wherein *Circumcision* was first instituted, we can by no means conclude that a Right to Circumcision did

did result therefrom; For certainly the Patriarchs, and other good Men then living, and their Families, were as truly Church-members, as *Abraham* and his Family; yet were they not therefore to be circumcised, but the *particular Law and positive Institution* of this Ordinance, did alone determine the Subjects thereof. And moreover;

4. It was not *Membership in Abraham's Family* singly and simply considered, that brought a Person under the Law of Circumcision, without respect to other *Circumstances of Time and Sex* expressly set down in the Institution; For Circumcision was to be applied to *the Males only*, tho' the Right of *Church-membership* belonged as as well to *the Females* as to them: And it is no satisfactory Answer to say the Female is not a *Subject capable of Circumcision*; For if it had pleased God to have made *Church-membership* the reason and ground of applying this Seal of the Covenant, he could easily have appointed *such a Sign*, as *all Members* had been capable of; Besides, how doth it appear that the Females were utterly incapable of any kind of Circumcision? Save that God required no such thing: *Vitriacus* reports that the *Jacobites* use Circumcision of both Sexes; and so do the *Habassines*; and therefore the thing in it self is not impossible; that which hath been done, may be done: Moreover we find the circumcising of *the Males* was limited

limited to the eighth day; it might not be done sooner, nor delayed longer: and *the Slaves* that were bought with Money *must needs be circumcised*; tho' they were no Church-members, nor the Children of such; from all which it is manifest, that they proceeded not upon a Notion of *Church-membership*, but were strictly governed by Divine Institution in the matter of circumcising or not circumcising.

5. To conclude; It is granted that the *Jewish Infants* were *born Members of that Church*; This Priviledg they had in the Flesh; But this evidently belongs unto *the national and typical Church-state* of that People; which State by the Gospel is dissolved, and is so inconsistent with the *Ministration* thereof, that the *Position* of the one, necessarily infers the *Abolition* of the other; And therefore this Right and Priviledg of the Jew which was in the very Foundation of their national Church-state, as separated from the Gentiles, cannot be transfer'd into, because it will not comport with, the Gospel-dispensation.

Besides, It is evident throughout the whole Gospel, that Right of Membership in the Jewish Church, could never give to any, either Infant or Adult, a like Right of Membership in the Gospel Church; nor was there ever any one received thereinto, *ex nomine*, because he had such a Right according to the State of the Old Covenant. And there is good Reason to conclude, that the carnal Seed of Believers can derive

no higher Priviledg from the Covenant of Circumcision, then the carnal Seed of *Abraham* obtained thereby : And if it could not bring the one into the Gospel Church, nor give them a Right to Baptism without an actual Compliance with the Terms of the Gospel, by Repentance and Faith, it can by no means do so for the other, tho' we should suppose them concerned in it, as indeed they are not.

“ It remains therefore ; That as Circumcision
“ of old Time was administred according to the
“ positive Law, and express Will of the Lord ;
“ so ought Baptism to be now, and no other-
“ wise ; neither can I see any ground to con-
“ clude for *Pædobaptism*, until such a divine Law
“ can be produced for the warrant of it, as was
“ of old given, for circumcising the Male Infants
“ of the Jews.

CHAP.

Of the mutual Respect of the Promises made to *Abraham*.

C H A P. VIII.

An Introduction to the general Design of this Chapter. §. 1. The present Intermixture of the Promises of spiritual, with those of temporal Blessings, suitable to the Darkness of the Old-Testament-dispensation: The like observed in the Writings of the Prophets: The mistake of the Jews hereupon. §. 2. The mutual Respect, and Dependence, of these Promises: The Concern of Abraham's Faith in the Promise of Isaac's Birth. §. 3. Wherein the Greatness of Abraham's Tryal in offering up Isaac did consist: All the Promises made to Abraham meet in one general Issue. §. 4. The typical Respect and Analogy of the Covenant of Peculiarity to the Covenant of Grace: Israel, in one respect, a Type of Christ mystical: This explained: The typical Respect of Circumcision to his perfect Righteousness. §. 5. Colos. 2.

11. proposed, and explained. §. 6. A typical Representation of the future State of the Church in Abraham's Family : Gal. 4. 21. &c. proposed ; and the Sum of that Context collected. §. 7. Some farther Observations, and Inferences from thence. §. 8. Several things recollected, and Direction given for their Use as a Key to many Prophecies and Promises in the Old Testament. §. 9. Rom. 4. 11. proposed, and the Terms explained. §. 10. How Circumcision became unto Abraham a Seal of the Righteousness of the Faith which he had while uncircumcised. §. 11. The Account given of it confirmed, by the Words of the Text, Scope of the Context, and its Harmony with other Scriptures that speak of Circumcision, and its Use : The Conclusion of the Treatise. §. 12.

§. 1. **I**N the Chapters foregoing, I have endeavoured to treat distinctly of the Promises given to Abraham ; first of those that belong to his spiritual, and then of such as appertain to his carnal Seed ; which Promises (notwithstanding their different Nature, and Importance) we have found frequently *intertwined* in the same Trans-action of God with Abraham, they being in the sacred History presented to us *intertwined* the one with

with the other ; And now the order of our Discourse leads us to make a more particular Enquiry into *that mutual Respect of the Promises*, which might give *Occasion for*, and render *necessary*, such an *Intermixture* of them.

§. 2. And the first thing which I shall offer to be considered upon this Head, is ;

That this *Order and Disposition* of the Promises is excellently suited to the *Dispensation of those Times* wherein they were given forth, and to that State of the *Israelitish Church* which was, not long after, to be built upon them : For these things were transacted long before the time appointed for the clear breaking up of Gospel-light to the World, which was not to be expected till Christ came in the Flesh, before whose coming the Law was to take place, and the Oeconomy of the Old Covenant to remain for many Generations: And therefore, altho' the Gospel was preached unto *Abraham* ; yet was it not delivered unto him with that *Plainness and Perspicuity* as it is in the New-Testament, but for the most part as shadowed and figured by outward things ; And hence, That which concerns the State of *Israel* under the *Mosaical Oeconomy* is *more expressly and fully* declared unto *Abraham*, than what concerns his spiritual Seed under the Gospel ; And therefore tho' this latter be the chief thing intended and aimed at (because the perfection of all the rest) in all divine Transactions with *Abraham*.

yet is it, for the most part, *mytically infolded in*, and to be inferred from, *the typical Respect* of the other thereunto; which leaves the Glory of Gospel-grace still under that *Vail*, which accompanied the Old Testament-state of the Church; the *full opening* of those Promises that did immediately belong to the Covenant of Grace; being reserved for another State of things in the Church; *God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect: Heb. 11. 40.* A dim Light was suited to those Times; and it could be but dim, so long as the Promises lay so much intangled one within another. The like is to be observed in After-times, in the Revelation of the Mind of God to *Israel* by the Prophets; For in the prophetick Writings (as it appears that the temporal Deliverances of *Israel*, are considered as typical of the spiritual Redemption of the Church; so) we often meet with sudden, and (seemingly) abrupt Transitions from the Promises of things relating to the present State of *Israel* after the Flesh, unto Promises and Prophecies of those things which are accomplished in the New-Testament by the Ministration of the Spirit, which being generally delivered in Terms suitable to the present Dispensation of things, and their typical Respect, are by the Jews wofully perverted unto this day, while they contend that themselves are *the only People* concerned in them, to whom the Blessings, promised and prophesied of, do belong; and that they are to be fulfilled

unto

unto them in a way agreeable to their former State, and suited to their own carnal Lusts and Imaginations; whereby they harden themselves in their Contempt of the Grace of God in Christ, and the spiritual Blessings of the Gospel, wherein the Accomplishment of those Prophecies, according to the true Sence of them, is only to be sought. And thus Jesus Christ himself became a Stone of stumbling, and Rock of Offence to them; because the State of his Kingdom suited not their carnal Minds, nor answered their groundless Expectation.

§. 3. It is also to be observed; That there is not only a singular *Congruity, and Fitness* in this *Method* of giving forth the Promises, in regard of the Time wherein they were made to *Abraham*, and that State of the Church which was next to follow upon these Transactions; but there is also in some respect a *Necessity* of it arising from the *Nature of the things promised, and their mutual Dependence one upon the other.* For,

All the Promises of a spiritual Seed, and spiritual Blessings to be bestowed on that Seed, (which belong to the Covenant of Grace as revealed to *Abraham*) are *Yea and Amen* in Christ Jesus: And this *Messiah*, in whom the Covenant was confirmed, was to be made of the *Seed of Abraham according to the Flesh*; and for the bringing of him forth, according to the Promise, was the Seed of *Abraham* by *Isaac* and *Jacob*, separated unto God

for a peculiar People, and kept distinct from all other Families in the World; and in this respect, the Blessing of Grace and eternal Life given unto *Abraham*, and his believing Seed, was suspended upon the Effect and Accomplishment of the Promises concerning his natural Offspring; and particularly upon the Promise of *Isaac's* Birth; who was to be begotten by *Abraham*, and brought forth by *Sarah*, at such a time, when *Nature* in them both was *so weakened by Age*, that they were as unapt, he to beget, and she to conceive a Son, as if they had been *already dead*, Rom. 4. 19. And hence it is, that the Apostle doth lay so great Weight upon *Abraham's* Faith in this Particular, even in the Business of his Justification before God; The Object of justifying Faith, *the Messiah to come*, being thus included in the Promise of *Isaac's* Birth: On this account his Parents had the greatest Cause of rejoicing at the Birth of this Son, who hath his Name from *Laughter*, and *Rejoicing*: Gen. 17. 17. and Chap. 21. And to this (in part) may be referred the saying of our Saviour, *Abraham rejoiced to see my Day, and he saw it, and was glad*: Joh. 8. 56. He saw it in the Birth of *Isaac* (and afterwards in the offering of him up) who was a Type of Christ, and from whom he was to come; whose miraculous Birth, in the virtue of a Promise, when *Nature* could not have effected it, afforded also some Adumbration of, and was a Prælude to, the more miraculous Birth of Christ, who
was

was conceived and brought forth by a pure Virgin (the Power of the most High overshadowing her) for the fulfilling of that Promise, *The Seed of the Woman shall break the Head of the Serpent.* As Isaac in the Type, so Christ more eminently, *sprang up as a Root out of a dry Ground*; Isa. 53.

§. 4. Now from these things we may collect with Ease, and great Clearness, wherein *the Greatness* of Abraham's Tryal, and the Eminency of his Faith in offering up Isaac, did specially consist: To part with a Son, an obedient Son; a Son grown up (as Isaac now was) yea an only Son, was indeed a great Tryal; howbeit Abraham was not only required to part with him, but to sacrifice him; and for a Father to become the Executioner of his Son, the Son of his old Age, and the Object of his most endeared Affections; for him (I say) to be appointed the Priest that must slay this Victim, adds yet much more to the Tryal; And in Abraham's addressing himself to such a Service (had there been no more in it) without Debate, murmuring, or delay, we have an unparalleld Instance, and Example of Piety, and Obedience: But alas! There is a Concern infinitely greater, in this Case, than all that hath been yet mentioned; *Isaac was the Son of the Promise,* (And upon this account the Holy Ghost places it — *he that had received the Promises offered up his only begotten Son: Of whom it was said, in Isaac shall thy Seed be called*; Heb. 11. 17, 18.) *Abraham*

had no other Son in whom he might expect the fulfilling of the Promise when *Isaac* was lost; and yet upon the Accomplishment of this Promise, in the bringing forth of the *Messiah* in *Isaac's* Line, the eternal Salvation of *Abraham*, and of the whole Church depended; and therefore he is called his only begotten, not because *Abraham* had no other Son, but because he was the only Heir of the Promise. This might have caused the greatest Anxiety of Mind imaginable, in *Abraham*, had he at all consulted with Flesh and Blood in the case; but his Faith overcame this Difficulty, and silenced all carnal Reasonings about the Impossibility of the Accomplishment of the Promise, if this Command were obeyed; Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the Dead, from whence also he received him in a Figure: Heb. 11. 19. And the Issue made it abundantly manifest, that the readiness of *Abraham* to obey in this Case, did put the Promise to no real Hazard; for it brought forth means of farther Confirmation of his Faith, by the Exhibition of an eminent Type of the Redemption of the Church by the Death and Resurrection of Christ; unto which was added the renewing of God's Promises to him, both for his spiritual and carnal Seed and that with their Confirmation by the Oath of the great God: Gen. 22. 17, 18. But to return to that which concerns our present Purpose.

From these things we may certainly collect, that all the Promises made to *Abraham*, were ordered

dered of God *to meet in one general Issue*; For as the Promises concerning the carnal Seed, and their State, were subservient unto the Ends of of God's Covenant with the spiritual Seed: so also the the Promises peculiarly belonging to the spiritual Seed, were to have their Effect and Accomplishment *in a Seed that must descend from Abraham according to the Flesh*: And therefore that *Interchange* of the Promises which hath been observed to you, ought not in any wise to seem strange.

§. 5. Again, *The typical Respect and Analogy of the Covenant of Peculiarity unto the Covenant of Grace*, as after to be more fully revealed, and accomplished in Christ, affords another Occasion of, and Reason for, the *interweaving* of those Promises which require a distinct Application: some of them belonging immediately to the carnal, and others to the spiritual Seed, as arising from the springs, and ordered towards the Ministration of two distinct Covenants: That there was a Disposition of things in the Old Testament with a *typical Respect* to the things that are of a spiritual Nature, and Concern, in the New, is so fully, and clearly asserted by the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures, that it hath obtained a general Acknowledgment from those that own their Authority, as also that many things in the Transactions of God with *Abraham* were of this Nature; largely to insist on these things is besides my present Design; only for

for the better clearing of the Point under Consideration, I shall briefly touch upon something of this kind: And first, let it be observed;

That the Body of the *Israelitish Nation*, considered as an *holy People*, and the *Lord's first-born*, Exed. 4. 22, 23. Jer. 2. 3. bearing in their Flesh the Character of Circumcision (which laid them under an Obligation to perform the Righteousness of the Law) was not only a Seed separated unto God for the bringing forth of the *Messiah*, but also, was a *Type of Christ mystical*, viz. of that Seed, and Body, whereof Christ is the Head, and true Believers are the Members (who in this Relation are considered as compleat in him) and so did eminently point at his being made *under the Law*, Gal. 4. 4. and (by the perfect fulfilling thereof) becoming *the End of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believeth*; Rom. 10. 4.

Thus much (I suppose) may be fairly gathered from that saying of the Prophet in *Hos. 11. 1.*

* *Vid. Junii Annotationes in locum, & ejusdem Parallela.* * *Out of Egypt have I called my Son*; compared with *Mat. 2. 15.* where the Evangelist applies it unto Christ. And, probably for this reason is Christ prophesied of by the Name of *Israel*, *Esa. 49. 3.* Christ was the *Seed* in whom the Substance of that Righteousness, that was shadowed in the Circumcision of *Israel*, was to be found; and from whom it is derived upon all true Believers for their Justification before God, and *Introduction into such a*

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State wherein they should acceptably walk before God, and worship him in *newness of Spirit*: Thus Circumcision did not only oblige to the keeping of the Law (in which respect, it was an heavy Yoke *Act. 15. 10.*) but did also (as subservient to the Promise) point at the *Messiah* who was to come under a legal Bond to fulfil all Righteousness, that thro' Faith in his Name such a Righteousness might be obtained, as is *witnessed to both by the Law and the Prophets*: *Rom. 3. 21.* It is *Christ alone*, in whom the Design of Circumcision is *fully answered*: And as under the Old Testament-Ministration, no Man could enjoy the Priviledges of the Covenant of Peculiarity without Circumcision, none being admitted to walk before God in that Covenant, without *this Sign* of a perfect Righteousness and Purity according to the Law; so now, none can have entrance into the Kingdom of Grace, nor obtain a Right in the spiritual Blessings and Priviledges of the New-Covenant, but by an Interest in the *Righteousness of Christ* thro' Faith, and by coming under the Imputation of his Obedience, wherein the Law was fulfilled for us. And seeing this was one (and that the most comfortable, if not the chief) end of Circumcision, as it served the Design of the Covenant of Grace towards the Elect; the Continuance of it now, with the same respect which it had in its first Institution, would be in effect, *to deny that Christ is come in the Flesh.*

I intend not by any thing I have said to intimate

mate a Denial of the typical respect of Circumcision to the *Sanctification of Believers* also; neither is that Notion of it in the least weakened, but rather strengthened in its proper Place; For as the *real Holiness* of Believers springs from *their Union to Christ*, and Justification thro' the Faith of his Name; so I take Circumcision, first to look towards that perfect Righteousness which we have in Jesus Christ; and then to that sincere (tho' imperfect) Holiness that is wrought in us by the Spirit of Christ: *For we are the Circumcision which worship God in the Spirit; and rejoyce in Christ Jesus, and have no Confidence in the Flesh: Phil. 3. 3.*

§. 6. And I conceive if those other Texts in the New-Testament that look towards the mystical use of Circumcision, be well weighed, and the scope of the Context in which they are, duly considered, they will cast a great Light upon the Notion proposed to you; I cannot stay upon all, But for Instance, let us repair to *Col. 2. 11.* *In whom also ye are circumcised with the Circumcision made without hands, in putting off the Body of the Sins of the Flesh, by the Circumcision of Christ.*

The design of the Apostle's Discourse in the whole Context, is, to confirm the Souls of the believing *Colossians* in the Faith of the Gospel, and particularly in that great Article of the Christian Religion concerning our being justified freely by the Grace of God, thro' the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus; *Rom. 3. 24.* and to caution them

not

not to be led away by the *Error of the Wicked* from the *Simplicity of Truth* which they had received; But as they had received Christ Jesus the Lord; so they should walk in him: Rooted and built up in him, and established in the Faith; ver. 6, 7. And (saith he) Beware lest any Man spoile you through Philosophy and vain Deceit, after the Tradition of Men, after the Rudiments of the World, and not after Christ; ver. 8. The Men which the Apostle brands in these last Words, are those that endeavour'd the Subversion of the Liberty of the Gentile Churches, and intangling them again in the yoke of Legal Bondage; in order whereunto, they did not only assert the *Levitical Ceremonies*, to be still, and in their own nature, acceptable Service to God; but also, that they were of perpetual Use, because of those *Philosophick Secrets, and Mysteries of Nature*, which they pretended were wrapt up in them; which Conceit they had no ground for (God having at no time appointed them to such an End) but from the *Tradition of their Elders*: This it is which the Apostle intends, by *Philosophy and vain Deceit after the Tradition of Men*: And, to prevent their being insnared with this corrupt Doctrine, he informs them how Christ was the *End and Substance* of all those Shadows, and that all Fulness dwels in him, in whom they were compleat; and therefore ought not to turn back to the Law, or its Ceremonies, to seek Perfection from them; seeing by Christ they were made Partakers of that real Benefit, which was

but

but darkly pointed at, and shadowed by the Ceremonies of the Law: For so he adds in this 11th Verse, *In whom also ye are circumcised*; (mind) They are not said to be circumcised *in themselves*, but *in Christ*; because in him they were compleatly justified by the Imputation of a perfect Righteousness, which Circumcision under the Law, as an Ordinance of the Old Covenant, did oblige Men to, and as subordinate to the Promise did prefigure: Hence the Apostle affirms, that *Believers are the Circumcision*, who place their whole Trust in Jesus Christ: *Phil. 3. 3.* and whereas they are also described to be such as *worship God in the Spirit*; this doth not restrain the Notion of their Circumcision to the Righteousness of Sanctification, but rather describes the Persons by another Fruit, and Property, of that Grace whereby they are justified; *Confer. Rom. 8. 4.* In the following words of this Text in *Colos.* the Circumcision spoken of, is said to be, — *In the putting off the Body of the Sins of the Flesh*; which is primarily intended of our Justification, and includes Sanctification as a necessary Concomitant thereof; It is by Justification that we are compleatly delivered from a State of Sin, and the Mass of Corruption (as Joshua was from his filthy Garments.) *Zach. 3. 4.* by an Implantation into, and Union with Christ, who dyed for our Sins, and rose again for our Justification; and therefore this change of their State, is said to be, by their being quickned together with Christ; ver. 13. and this quickning is that

of *Justification*, wherein they were raised from that deadly state of Guiltiness, in which they were, while *dead in their Sins, and the uncircumcision of their Flesh*, unto a state of Life, Righteousness, and Acceptance with God, *who forgives them all Trespases*. Now this *putting off the Body of the Sins of the Flesh*, is,

— By the *Circumcision of Christ*. I know Expositors do generally take that Circumcision which is the work of the Spirit of Christ in the Soul, to be here intended; as they do apply the whole Verse to our Sanctification; but I conceive as our Justification is primarily intended in the Context, so the scope of the Apostle's Discourse leads us rather to interpret this to be *that Circumcision wherewith Christ was circumcised*; the Sign being put for the thing signified; viz. the Circumcision of Christ, for his perfect Obedience, and fulfilling of the Law: In Circumcision was the first bearing of the Yoke of the Law; and by it the Person circumcised was bound to keep the whole Law, otherwise his *Circumcision became Uncircumcision*; Rom. 2. 25. so then, the Circumcision of Christ is a convincing Evidence of his being *made under the Law*; and by a perfect fulfilling thereof, he brought in that everlasting Righteousness, thro' the Imputation of which, all that are in him are justified before God: And *this Communion* that Believers have with Christ in his Benefits thro' the Faith of the Operation of God, is in a lively manner held out, and signified

nished to them in their Baptism, wherein they are said to be both *buried and risen together with him*; Col. 2. 12. The Immersion of the Body into the Water bearing an Analogy to his Burial, as the raising of it again out of the Water doth to his Resurrection. This the Apostle intends, that even their Baptism upon their first receiving, and profession of the Christian Religion, did reach and oblige them to live upon Christ alone, and to joyn no other thing with him in the Foundation of their Hope.

These things being so, Circumcision was of use no longer, neither had Christians any Concernment in it; for having reached the Accomplishment of its utmost End in Jesus Christ, it expired in Course, and vanished away with the whole Frame of the *Mosaical* Oeconomy: And so far is the Apostle from intimating that Baptism came in the room of Circumcision, that he discourses of them, as appertaining to *two Covenants so differenced* one from the other, and *in their compleat Ministration opposed* the one to the other, as that they could by no means (in this last respect) consist together.

§. 7. In the next place; It is to be noted,
 That there was "*A typical Representation of the future State of the Church (viz. in the days of the Gospel) in the present Transactions of God with Abraham, and the State of his Family thereupon.*" The Explication of all Particulars

particulars belonging hereunto, would require an enlargement of this Discourse beyond its intended Bounds; And therefore, to our present Purpose, I shall only point at the Heads of those things which the Apostle sets before us in *Gal. 4.* from *ver 21,* to the end of the *Chapter.*

Upon the reading of this Context, you will observe that the Allegory insisted on by the Apostle is grounded upon this historical Verity,

1. That *Abraham* had a twofold Seed; the one proceeding from him according to the ordinary Course, and by the Strength of Nature, the other brought forth by virtue of a Promise; the one was *Ishmael* by *Hagar*, a Bond-woman, the other *Isaac* by *Sarah* a Free-woman.

2. The Bond-woman and her Son, had the Precedence, in time of Conception and Birth, to the Free-woman and her Son.

3. In process of time the Son of the Bond-woman who was *born after the Flesh*, persecutes the Son of the Free-woman who was *born after the Spirit*; i. e. in the virtue of the Promise; And thereupon *the Bond-woman and her Son are cast out of the Family*, and *Isaac* remains there as the only Heir of his Father's Blessing.

That these things were disposed of God with a typical Respect to Gospel-times, the Apostle asserts, and thus applies them:

Hagar was a Type of *mount Sinai*, and the Legal Covenant there established; and *Ishmael* was a Type of the carnal Seed of *Abraham*, as under

that Covenant: *Sarah* was a Type of the *New-Jerusalem*, or of the Gospel-Church founded on the Covenant of Grace; And *Isaac*, a Type of the true Members of that Church, who are *born of the Spirit*; being converted by the power of the Holy Ghost, for the fulfilling of the Promise of the Father, unto *Jesus-Christ* the Mediator: And, the Ejection of *Hagar* and *Ishmael* was to foreshew the Abrogation of the *Sinai-Covenant*, and dissolving of the Jewish Church-state; that so the Inheritance of spiritual Blessings might be clearly devolved upon the Children of God by Faith in *Jesus-Christ*.

There are many other things worthy to be observed, which it is not my present Work to insist upon; this general View which hath been taken of the Context being sufficient to prepare our way to the following Observations.

6. 8. First, The Apostle who in *Gal. 3. 8, & 17.* calleth the Promise recorded in *Gen. 12.* the Gospel preached to *Abraham*; and the Covenant confirmed of God in *Christ*: doth here expressly call that Covenant-Transaction unto which Circumcision belonged, and wherein the Right and Priviledg of the natural Seed of *Abraham* was stated, the Law; and their desire of being under it he condemns, as proceeding from their Folly and Ignorance: *Gal. 4. 21.*

2. Notwithstanding all the Priviledges of *Israel* after the Flesh, they remained in a state of Bondage

age under the Law: And their being Parties in the *Sinai* Covenant, and in the Covenant of Circumcision, and Children of the earthly *Jerusalem* (or Members of that Church whose State was founded on the Covenants before mentioned) and so interested in all the Worship there to be performed, (all this I say) could no more give them Interest in, and Right to, the spiritual Blessings of *Abraham*, then *Ishmael's* carnal Descent from him, could either inright himself or his Seed, in the Covenant of Peculiarity made with *Israel*, and the outward Blessings thereof: For altho' the Seed of *Abraham* by *Isaac* were under the Dispensation of those Blessings that were the shadow, and Type of the good things of the Gospel; yet their *Birth-right*, and proper Claim in the Interest of their Covenant, did fall as far short of Gospel-blessings, as *Ishmael's* did of their Priviledges; For as *Ishmael* was, in a literal Sence, born after the Flesh and the Son of a Bond-woman, so were they mystically; and as *Ishmael* did persecute *Isaac*, so they (being puffed up with a vain Confidence in their carnal Priviledg, and Prerogative) did not only reject the Gospel themselves, but also persecuted the Children of the New *Jerusalem*; And therefore as he was cast out of *Abraham's* Family, and excluded from any part in the Inheritance of the Son of Promise, so must they be excluded from the Kingdom of God, and the Inheritance of the Blessings thereof.

Thus did God, in the very beginning of the Covenant-state of Israel after the Flesh, in this Type set before their Eyes the Imperfection thereof, and the sad End they would bring themselves to, by a resting in it, and overweening of it.

3. Howbeit, The Covenant of Peculiarity made with Israel, and the Dispensation that God brought them under pursuant to the Ends thereof, was typical of the Gospel-Covenant and the State of things therein. In Isaac we have a Type of the Children of God by Faith; and as he (in his Seed) was the Heir of Canaan, so are they Heirs of Heaven; And as he was persecuted by Ishmael, so must they expect Trouble in the World, and look to be maligned by all carnal and Pharisaical Spirits, that seek to establish their own Righteousness, and refuse to submit to the righteousness of God; In a word, the People, their Worship, and Inheritance, was all typical; And yet, as Abraham's Spiritual Seed may behold the shadow of their own State and Priviledg, in the

mystical Respect, and typical Oeconomy of the Jewish Church; so they again might, and ought to consider themselves in their outward State to be but typical; and while they were figures of

*Parā quadam ter-
rena Civitate, ima-
go celestis Civitatis
efficta est, non se
significando, sed al-
teram. Et idē ser-
vamus. Neque enim*

*propter suā, sed
propter aliam significandam est instituta, & precedente alia
significatione, & ipsa præfigurans, præfigurata est. Namq;
Agar ancilla Sara, ejusq; Filius, imago quadam hujus
maginis fuit. August. de Civita Dei, Lib. 1. Cap. 2.*

the

the Children of Promise, both themselves, their State, and End, was figured in the Son of the Bond-woman and his Rejection.

Now from hence we may infer, that

1. The carnal Seed of Believers, can obtain no greater Priviledg by the *Covenant of Circumcision*, than the Seed of *Abraham by Isaac* had; and their Priviledg reached not to an Interest in Gospel-Blessings, or in the New Covenant, unless they obtained that Right for themselves by believing; otherwise they had no more Right in them, by their natural Descent from *Abraham*, than *Ishmael* had in the Blessings of their Covenant of Peculiarity; And their Interest in typical Priviledges, must needs cease, and vanish away, when the things typified were exhibited.

2. The State of *Israel after the Flesh* being typical; The *Israel of God* among them, were taught to look above, and beyond their external Priviledges, unto those things that were shadowed by them, as set before their Faith in the Promises of Grace by *Christ*; and so to live upon the Grace of that Covenant, which their outward State, and Covenant of Peculiarity was subservient to; And unto them, all these things had a spiritual, and evangelical Use; which being their principal End and Intent, a fair Occasion is ministered for such an Intermixture of the Promises of Typical, with those of real Blessings, as we have

now had under Consideration; Because the Covenant of Grace, and that of Circumcision have their *mutual Respect*, as the *Type to its Antitype*.

§. 9. And these things are not only necessary to the right Understanding of those divine Transactions with *Abraham* which we have been treating of; but also are of Use for the opening, and right Application of very many Prophecies, and Promises of the Old Testament; and for the avoiding of those stumbling Blocks (and others like unto them) which the blind Jews have fallen, and do fall upon to this day.

The Phrasology of the Old Testament will hardly be understood in divers Places, without due regard to many of those things that we have been treating of: *viz.*

1. That during the time of the Law, the true Church was impaled within the Bounds of the Common-wealth of *Israel*; which in its *intire Body* was a *typical Church*.

2. That the Children of God after the Spirit (tho' as Children under Age, they were subject to the Pædagogy of the Law, yet) as to their spiritual and eternal State, did walk before God, and found Acceptance with him, upon Terms of the Covenant of Grace.

3. That the whole Oeconomy this People were under, did in its typical respect, subserve the Ends of the Covenant of Grace to the Elect, who were the true and spiritual Worshippers of God; And the

the greatest, and only visible Number of them, was to be preserved among that People, until the Gospel Church-state should take place.

4. But yet, this spiritual Relation to God according to the Terms of the New-Covenant which the truly Godly then had, was not so clearly held forth under the Old Testament as it is in the times of the New, and by the Dispensation of the Gospel: But the things relating thereto, were very much wrapt up in dark Shadows, and Figures. And therefore,

Many times the things, and People typified, are spoken of in propheticall Scriptures, under the names of those Things, and that People, which were the Types of them; And the Promise of the choicest Gospel- blessings, and most glorious State (with respect to spiritual Glory) of the New-Testament Church, are given forth to *Israel of old* in those Terms that did *signify the present State* of things; and are peculiarly directed unto them, and their Seed; but these Promises being given to them as considered in their Relation to God, as his only visible Church, and Covenant-people, are not to be applyed to *Israel* after the Flesh, as such, but had their Accomplishment in the Church when *Israel* was rejected, and the Gentiles called to inherit the Blessing of *Abraham*, Howbeit they being directly given out to *Israel* and *Jacob*, as the only true Church then in being, and a People in whom the Church, which should be was typified; it was but meet and necessary

(especially considering that the spiritual Glory of the Gospel, and the calling of the Gentiles, was a Mystery not to be unfolded in those times, but kept under a Veil) that the Terms made use of in those Prophecies and Promises, should be accommodated unto that *Oeconomy* under which the Church then was; which yet must be interpreted in a Sence agreeable to *those times, and that Dispensation*, in which they were to have their full Accomplishment. And therefore seeing the Church was then continued in a Line of natural Descent from *Abraham*, being propagated by *Generation* as long as the Old Covenant state thereof remained unshaken, the Promises made to the Church respecting her future Glory, Peace, and Blessedness in the days of the *Messiah*, are given forth as to the *Seed and Offspring* of the Church then in Being; tho' they did really belong to, and were intended for, (not a carnal Offspring, but) those that God should continue to own as his Covenant-People and Church; even such as should walk in the steps of *Abraham's Faith*, the Gentiles, as well as Jews.

§. 10. All that now remains to be done before I draw to a Period of this Discourse, is to consider how far *the mutual Respect of the Promises made to Abraham* may guide us towards a right understanding, how *Circumcision* became unto *Abraham, a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith, &c.* which the Apostle affirms it to have bin, *Rom. 4. 11.* And

And in opening that Text, the grand Objection against that Notion of the Covenant of Circumcision which I have insisted on, will be obviated. In order hereunto, I shall first set down the Text, and give you a brief Exposition of it; then shew you wherein it was verified: and offer something for the strengthening and Eviction of the Sense given.

The words of the Text are;

And he received the Sign of Circumcision, a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith which he had being yet uncircumcised; that he might be the Father of all them that believe, tho' they be not circumcised, that Righteousness may be imputed unto them also.

In the Verses foregoing the Apostle is discoursing of the time wherein Abraham's Faith was imputed to him for Righteousness, and proves from thence the equal Right of the uncircumcised Gentile (if a Believer) with the circumcised Jew, in the Blessings of the Gospel, by means of a spiritual Relation to Abraham, inasmuch as his Faith was reckoned to him for Righteousness, not in Circumcision, but in Uncircumcision;

And he received the Sign of Circumcision; i. e. Circumcision which was a Sign; It is genitivus Speciei; as when we read the City of Jerusalem; for the City Jerusalem; and the like: Some Greek Copies do here read περιτομήν. This belongs to the general use, nature, and end of Circumcision, it was a Sign; but moreover, unto Abraham it was,

— *A Seal of the Righteousness of the Faith which he had being yet uncircumcised*; A Seal is for Confirmation, and Assurance; and in this notion of a Seal there may be some respect to that visible Mark and Character which remained in the Flesh of him that was circumcised; for we read not that any other Ordinance (no not Baptism) is so called in Scripture; but in the New Testament the sealing of Believers is attributed to the Holy Ghost.

— *Of the Righteousness of the Faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised*; that is, of his being Righteous before God thro' believing; which Faith he had, and which Righteousness was imputed to him (the Relative may agree with either Antecedent) while he was uncircumcised; There are some Words supplied by the Translators to fill up the sence in our English Phrase, which the learned Dr. Lightfoot in his *Hor. Hebraic. on Cor. 7. 19.* fills up by another Supply that gives somewhat a differing sence of the Text, which I refer the Reader to, as not unworthy his Consideration; but shall here rest satisfied with that sence which our Translation affords us. It follows,

— *That he might be the Father of all that believe in Uncircumcision*: the sence is, that he might be manifested to be (things are in Scripture oftentimes said to be, when they are by any solemn Act declared, or confirmed) the Father of all believing Gentiles, tho' they be not circumcised inasmuch as they also are a part of that spiritual

Seed

Seed promised to him in Uncircumcision.

— *That Righteousness might be imputed to them also*: take it as before, that it might be made manifest, and confirmed, that Righteousness is, and shall be imputed to them also: See ver. 23, 24.

§. 11. Having given this brief Explication of the Terms used in the Text, the next thing to be enquired is; wherein are the Contents of it verified? or how, or in what respect, was Circumcision a Seal of the Righteousness of the Faith which *Abraham* had being yet uncircumcised?

For answer to this Enquiry; observe,

1. That in the Prologue to this Covenant of Circumcision *Gen. 17.* God did expressly renew, and confirm to *Abraham*, the great Promise of the Covenant of Grace, concerning the justifying of the Gentiles by Faith in Christ, which Blessing they should receive in the Relation of Children to *Abraham*, and so he should become the Father of many Nations; And the Covenant of Circumcision being added to former Transactions wherein God had confirmed his Covenant in Christ with *Abraham*; the use of Circumcision (as to him) was not limited to that *Covenant of Peculiarity* unto which it did immediately belong, but must necessarily reach farther, and include a Confirmation of all preceding Transactions, & the Promises given in them, espec-

especially of that which was repeated, immediately before the Institution thereof. The Promises of God to *Abraham* (tho' of a different Nature) did not interfere one with another; but the latter still implied a Confirmation and Ratification of the former; This Covenant therefore did not supplant, but confirm the Truth of the Gospel before preached to *Abraham*, it was not added to disannul the Promise, but to serve the Ends thereof; and therefore Circumcision did not only seal to *Abraham* the Promises of typical Blessings now given, but also was a Seal of the Righteousness of the Faith which he had being yet uncircumcised, that he might be the Father of all that believe in Uncircumcision.

2. It was so (tho' more indirectly) on this account also:

Abraham's Faith (as we have seen before) was much concerned in the Promise of *Isaac's* Birth, and the separating of his Seed from other Nations for the bringing forth of the *Messiah*; and he knew well that the Covenant of Circumcision was made with him in pursuance of the great Promises before given; and so the Seal of this Covenant became unto him, a Seal of the Righteousness of the Faith which he had before, and confirmed him in his paternal Relation to Believers in all Nations, which was an Honour before conferred on him. It is the Discovery of the Subserviency of Circumcision, as received by *Abraham*, to the great End and Design of the

Cove-

Covenant of Grace (which was confirmed to Abraham before he was circumcised) that the Apostle particularly aims at in this Place; and he proves that the Covenant of Circumcision is so far from excluding the Gentiles from inheriting the Blessing of Abraham by Faith; as that it was, to him an Assurance and Seal of the Promise of so great a Priviledg to them; as also of his own Justification thro' Faith; while uncircumcised.

And moreover; The Covenant of Circumcision not being so compleat in it-self, as to bring the Church unto that Perfection which in the eternal Counsels of God's Sovereign Grace was intended; and therefore not capable to make any thing perfect by it-self; must needs be established as typical, and subservient to the Covenant of Grace, in a temporary Dispensation that should usher in, and then give place to the Gospel, in the fulness of Time; and in respect of this Disposition of the Covenant now made, the Sign by which it was confirmed, became ultimately and in its typical respect, a Seal of the Righteousness of the Faith which Abraham had before.

§. 12. It is no ways difficult to conceive, that Circumcision might have a different Respect, according to the differing Circumstances and Capacity of its Subject; Yea that it had so, in another Instance hath been already proved. It was a Seal of the Inheritance of Canaan to the Children of Israel, and did ensure the Promise thereof to them; and

and their Seed; But it gave their Bond-servants no such Right or Claim; Even so, it was to *Abraham a Seal of the Righteousness of the Faith which he had*, &c. but this arose from the peculiar, and extraordinary Circumstances, and Capacity that he was in; for it is not possible to conceive that Circumcision should be a *Seal of the Righteousness of the Faith which he had while uncircumcised*, that he might be the Father of all that believe in *Uncircumcision*, to one that never had Faith, either before or after his Circumcision, nor ever had, or should have, the Relation of a Father to all Believers, as *Abraham* had.

Now that the Apostle speaks of Circumcision here with respect to the peculiar Circumstances, and Capacity of *Abraham* who received it, is evident from the scope of his Discourse in the Context; in which the Argument that he manageth, is to prove that neither could Circumcision give to any an Interest in that Grace, that justifies a Sinner before God, nor the want of it hinder any from obtaining that Interest, in the way, and upon the Terms of the Gospel; seeing *Abraham* himself obtained it not by his carnal Prerogative, but was justified before he was circumcised; And the whole stress of his Argument, lies upon the Supposition of *Abraham's* being a Believer, and justified by his Faith, before he received Circumcision; Remove this, and his Discourse concludes nothing of what he intends; And hence he infers, that *Abraham* received Circumcision so, as that it was

was to him, a Seal (not simply, of the Righteousness of Faith, or of the New-Covenant, but) of the Righteousness of the Faith which he had being yet uncircumcised; as also of his paternal Relation to all Believers tho' they be not circumcised; for so it follows, *that he might be the Father of all them that believe*; And it is equally absurd to say that Circumcision was a Seal unto all its Subjects, of the Righteousness of Faith which they had while uncircumcised, as to affirm that it was the Seal of a paternal Relation to all Believers, unto every one that received it: Both these must necessarily be resolved into the peculiar Circumstances of Abraham, the particular Relation he had in the Covenants made with him, and the order of their Disposition; and not into the nature of Circumcision considered simply, and in it self.

And moreover it is observable, That immediately after, in the continuance of his Discourse in Rom. 4. the Apostle refers Circumcision to the Law, in contradistinction from the Gospel; for when he hath told us that the circumcised Jew could not obtain the Blessing of a spiritual Relation to Abraham by virtue of his Circumcision, unless he did walk in the steps of Abraham's Faith, which he had while uncircumcised, ver. 12, he assigns this as the reason of it in the 13th Verse; For the Promise that he should be the Heir of the World, was not to Abraham or to his Seed, thro' the Law, but through the Righteousness of Faith. And I cannot see how the Conclusion which the Apostle makes concern-

concerning the Inefficacy of Circumcision, is enforced by this Reason, if Circumcision immediately and in its own Nature had not belonged to the Law; but, to the *Righteousness of Faith, or Covenant of Grace, as an ordinary Seal thereof.*

Again; The Interpretation made of this Text is farther strengthened by the conference of other Places in the New-Testament, where we find that Circumcision is styled an *unsupportable Yoke*, Act. 5. 10. and is said to lay Men under an *Obligation to keep the whole Law*; Gal. 5. 3. and the compleat Dispensation of Grace in the Gospel according to the New-Covenant, is constantly insisted on as that which renders it utterly useless to the Gospel-Church, and manifests the Inconsistency of retaining the Practice thereof, with the Liberty of their present State. See for Instance the *Epistle to the Galatians*, and in Chap. 5. 13. the Apostle tells them if he did yet preach Circumcision, then was the Offence of the Cross ceased; and he might have lived free from the Persecutions he now suffered from the unbelieving Jews. It was the Apostles preaching Christ, so as therein to assert the shaking and removing of that Old Covenant, unto which Circumcision did belong, and by which the Jews held the Right of their peculiar Priviledges (tho' now in Truth, the Continuance of those could no longer have been a real Priviledg to them) that was the ground of the Controversie betwixt them, and of their

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unreasonable Opposition to him : For if the Controversie had been about *the Mode of administering* the same Covenant, and the *Change* only of an *external Rite*, by bringing *Baptism* into the place of *Circumcision*, to serve for the same Use and End now, as that had done before, the heat of their Contests might soon have been allayed; especially considering the latter is far less painful and dangerous than the former : But he will certainly find himself engaged in a very difficult Task, that shall seriously endeavour to reconcile the Apostles discourses of Circumcision, with such a Notion of it : Circumcision was an Ordinance of the Old Covenant, and appertained to the Law, and therefore did directly bind its Subjects to a legal Obedience ; but Baptism is an Ordinance of the Gospel, and (besides other excellent, and most comfortable Uses) directly obligeth its Subjects to Gospel-Obedience ; And therefore is rather, in this respect opposed to, than substituted in the place of Circumcision : And certainly it is more safe to interpret *one Text* according to the *general Current* of Scripture, and in a full *Harmony* therewith, than to force such a sense upon *many Texts*, which in no wise they will admit, to bring them into a Compliance with *that Notion of one* which our minds are prepossessed with ; And it is plain that the Notion I have insisted on, fully agrees with other places where Circumcision is discoursed of according to its immediate and direct Use in the old Cove-

nant: For there can be no Contradiction in ascribing a different, and seemingly opposite, Use and End, to the same thing, if it be done in a different Respect: What Circumcision was *directly and in its immediate Use*, is one thing; and what it was *as subordinate to a better Covenant, and Promise*, that had Precedency to it, is another: And it is easie to conceive, that it might be that to the *Father of the faithful, in its extraordinary Institution*, that it could not be to the *Children of the Flesh, or carnal Seed, in its ordinary Use*.

To conclude, if Circumcision and Baptism have the same Use, and are Seals of the same Covenant, I can hardly imagine how the Application of both to the same Subjects should at any time be proper; and yet we find those that were circumcised in their Infancy, were also baptized upon the Profession of Faith and Repentance, and that, *before Circumcision was abrogated*; yea according to the Opinion that hath been argued against, The Jews that believed before Christ had suffered, were at the same time under a Command both of circumcising and baptizing their Infant-seed. But if the Principles that this Discourse is built upon, be well proved by Scripture, as I take them to be, there must be allowed a vast Disparity, betwixt Circumcision and Baptism: *The Old Covenant, is not the New, nor that which is abolished, the same with that which remains*; and till these become one, Baptism and Circumcision will never be found so far one, as that the

Law for applying *this*, should be a *sufficient Warrant* for the Administration of *that*, unto Infants.

We have now past through the Covenant-Transactions of God with *Abraham*; after which we find no signal Alteration in the state of the Church, by any New Transactions, until the Law was given upon Mount *Sinai*. And therefore I shall here put a Period to my present Discourse, it being intended only, of the Covenants that God made with Men before the Law.

FINIS.

had no other Son in whom he might expect the fulfilling of the Promise when *Isaac* was lost; and yet upon the Accomplishment of this Promise, in the bringing forth of the *Messiah* in *Isaac's* Line, the eternal Salvation of *Abraham*, and of the whole Church depended; and therefore he is called his only begotten, not because *Abraham* had no other Son, but because he was the only Heir of the Promise. This might have caused the greatest Anxiety of Mind imaginable, in *Abraham*, had he at all consulted with Flesh and Blood in the case; but his Faith overcame this Difficulty, and silenced all carnal Reasonings about the Impossibility of the Accomplishment of the Promise, if this Command were obeyed; *Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the Dead*, from whence also he received him in a Figure: *Heb. 11. 19.* And the Issue made it abundantly manifest, that the readiness of *Abraham* to obey in this Case, did put the Promise to no real Hazard; for it brought forth means of farther Confirmation of his Faith, by the Exhibition of an eminent Type of the Redemption of the Church by the Death and Resurrection of Christ; unto which was added the renewing of God's Promises to him, both for his spiritual and carnal Seed and that with their Confirmation by the Oath of the great God: *Gen. 22. 17, 18.* But to return to that which concerns our present Purpose.

From these things we may certainly collect, that all the Promises made to *Abraham*, were ordered

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dered of God *to meet in one general Issue*; For as the Promises concerning the carnal Seed, and their State, were subservient unto the Ends of of God's Covenant with the spiritual Seed: so also the the Promises peculiarly belonging to the spiritual Seed, were to have their Effect and Accomplishment *in a Seed that must descend from Abraham according to the Flesh*: And therefore that *Interchange* of the Promises which hath been observed to you, ought not in any wise to seem strange.

9. 5. Again, *The typical Respect and Analogy of the Covenant of Peculiarity unto the Covenant of Grace*, as after to be more fully revealed, and accomplished in Christ, affords another Occasion of, and Reason for, the *interweaving* of those Promises which require a distinct Application: some of them belonging immediately to the carnal, and others to the spiritual Seed, as arising from the springs, and ordered towards the Ministration of two distinct Covenants: That there was a Disposition of things in the Old Testament with a *typical Respect* to the things that are of a spiritual Nature, and Concern, in the New, is so fully, and clearly asserted by the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures, that it hath obtained a general Acknowledgment from those that own their Authority; as also that many things in the Transactions of God with *Abraham* were of this Nature; largely to insinuate on these things is besides my present Design; only
for

for the better clearing of the Point under Consideration, I shall briefly touch upon something of this kind: And first, let it be observed;

That the Body of the *Israelitish Nation*, considered as an *holy People*, and the *Lord's first-born*, *Exod. 4. 22, 23. Jer. 2. 3.* bearing in their Flesh the Character of Circumcision (which laid them under an Obligation to perform the Righteousness of the Law) was not only a Seed separated unto God for the bringing forth of the *Messiah*, but also, was a *Type of Christ mystical*, viz. of that Seed, and Body, whereof Christ is the Head, and true Believers are the Members (who in this Relation are considered as compleat in him) and so did eminently point at his being made *under the Law*, *Gal. 4. 4.* and (by the perfect fulfilling thereof) becoming *the End of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believeth*; *Rom. 10. 4.*

Thus much (I suppose) may be fairly gathered from that saying of the Prophet in *Hos. 11. 1.*

* *Vid. Junii Annotationes in locum, & ejusdem Parallela.*

* *Out of Egypt have I called my Son*; compared with *Mat. 2. 15.* where the Evangelist applies it unto Christ. And, prob-

bably for this reason is Christ prophesied of by the Name of *Israel*, *Esa. 49. 3.* Christ was the Seed in whom the Substance of that Righteousness, that was shadowed in the Circumcision of *Israel*, was to be found; and from whom it is derived upon all true Believers for their Justification before God, and Introduction into such a

State

State wherein they should acceptably walk before God, and worship him in *newness of Spirit*: Thus Circumcision did not only oblige to the keeping of the Law (in which respect, it was an heavy Yoke *Act. 15. 10.*) but did also (as subservient to the Promise) point at the *Messiah* who was to come under a legal Bond to fulfil all Righteousness, that thro' Faith in his Name such a Righteousness might be obtained, as is *witnessed to both by the Law and the Prophets*: *Rom. 3. 21.* It is *Christ alone*, in whom the Design of Circumcision is *fully answered*: And as under the Old Testament-Ministration, no Man could enjoy the Priviledges of the Covenant of Peculiarity without Circumcision, none being admitted to walk before God in that Covenant, without *this Sign* of a perfect Righteousness and Purity according to the Law; so now, none can have entrance into the Kingdom of Grace, nor obtain a Right in the spiritual Blessings and Priviledges of the New-Covenant, but by an Interest in the *Righteousness of Christ* thro' Faith, and by coming under the Imputation of his Obedience, wherein the Law was fulfilled for us. And seeing this was one (and that the most comfortable, if not the chief) end of Circumcision, as it served the Design of the Covenant of Grace towards the Elect; the Continuance of it now, with the same respect which it had in its first Institution, would be in effect, *to deny that Christ is come in the Flesh.*

I intend not by any thing I have said to intimate

mate a Denial of the typical respect of Circumcision to the *Sanctification of Believers also*; neither is that Notion of it in the least weakened, but rather strengthened in its proper Place; For as the *real Holiness* of Believers springs from *their Union to Christ*, and Justification thro' the Faith of his Name; so I take Circumcision, first to look towards that perfect Righteousness which we have in Jesus Christ; and then to that sincere (tho' imperfect) Holiness that is wrought in us by the Spirit of Christ: *For we are the Circumcision which worship God in the Spirit; and rejoyce in Christ Jesus, and have no Confidence in the Flesh: Phil. 3.3.*

§. 6. And I conceive if those other Texts in the New-Testament that look towards the mystical use of Circumcision, be well weighed, and the scope of the Context in which they are, duly considered, they will cast a great Light upon the Notion proposed to you; I cannot stay upon all, But for Instance, let us repair to *Col. 2. 11. In whom also ye are circumcised with the Circumcision made without hands, in putting off the Body of the Sins of the Flesh, by the Circumcision of Christ.*

The design of the Apostle's Discourse in the whole Context, is, to confirm the Souls of the believing *Colossians* in the Faith of the Gospel, and particularly in that great Article of the Christian Religion concerning our *being justified freely by the Grace of God, thro' the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus*; *Rom. 3. 24.* and to caution them

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not to be led away by the *Error of the Wicked* from the *Simplicity of Truth* which they had received; *But as they had received Christ Jesus the Lord; so they should walk in him: Rooted and built up in him, and established in the Faith; ver. 6, 7.* And (saith he) *Beware lest any Man spoile you through Philosophy and vain Deceit, after the Tradition of Men, after the Rudiments of the World, and not after Christ; ver. 8.* The Men which the Apostle brands in these last Words, are those that endeavour'd the Subversion of the Liberty of the Gentile Churches, and intangling them again in the yoke of Legal Bondage; in order whereunto, they did not only assert the *Levitical Ceremonies*, to be still, and in their own nature, acceptable Service to God; but also, that they were of perpetual Use, because of those *Philosophick Secrets, and Mysteries of Nature*, which they pretended were wrapt up in them; which Conceit they had no ground for (God having at no time appointed them to such an End) but from the *Tradition* of their Elders: This it is which the Apostle intends; by *Philosophy and vain Deceit after the Tradition of Men*: And, to prevent their being insnared with this corrupt Doctrine, he informs them how Christ was *the End and Substance* of all those Shadows, and that all Fulness dwels in him, *in whom they were compleat*; and therefore ought not to turn back to the Law, or its Ceremonies, to seek *Perfection* from them; seeing by Christ they were made *Partakers* of that real Benefit, which was
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but darkly pointed at, and shadowed by the Ceremonies of the Law: For so he adds in this 11th Verse, *In whom also ye are circumcised*; (mind) They are not said to be circumcised *in themselves*, but *in Christ*; because in him they were completely justified by the *Imputation of a perfect Righteousness*, which Circumcision under the Law, as an Ordinance of the Old Covenant, did oblige Men to, and as subordinate to the Promise did prefigure: Hence the Apostle affirms, that *Believers are the Circumcision*, who place their whole Trust in Jesus Christ: *Phil. 3. 3.* and whereas they are also described to be such as *worship God in the Spirit*; this doth not restrain the Notion of their Circumcision to the Righteousness of Sanctification, but rather describes the Persons by another Fruit, and Property, of that Grace whereby they are justified; *Confer. Rom. 8. 4.* In the following words of this Text in *Colos.* the Circumcision spoken of, is said to be, — *In the putting off the Body of the Sin of the Flesh*; which is primarily intended of our Justification, and includes Sanctification as a necessary Concomitant thereof; It is by Justification that we are completely delivered from a *State of Sin, and the Mass of Corruption* (as Joshua was from his filthy Garments) *Zach. 3. 4.* by an Implantation into, and Union with Christ, who dyed for our Sins, and rose again for our Justification; and therefore this change of their State, is said to be, by their *being quickned together with Christ*; ver. 13. and this quickning is that

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of *Justification*, wherein they were raised from that deadly state of Guiltiness, in which they were, while *dead in their Sins*, and the *uncircumcision of their Flesh*, unto a state of Life, Righteousness, and Acceptance with God, *who forgives them all Trespases*. Now this putting off the Body of the Sins of the Flesh, is,

— By the *Circumcision of Christ*. I know Expositors do generally take that Circumcision which is the work of the Spirit of Christ in the Soul, to be here intended; as they do apply the whole Verse to our Sanctification; but I conceive as our Justification is primarily intended in the Context, so the scope of the Apostle's Discourse leads us rather to interpret this to be *that Circumcision wherewith Christ was circumcised*; the Sign being put for the thing signified; viz. the Circumcision of Christ, for his perfect Obedience, and fulfilling of the Law: In Circumcision was the first bearing of the Yoke of the Law; and by it the Person circumcised was bound to keep the whole Law, otherwise his *Circumcision became Uncircumcision*; Rom. 2. 25. so then, the Circumcision of Christ is a convincing Evidence of his being *made under the Law*; and by a perfect fulfilling thereof, he brought in that everlasting Righteousness, thro' the Imputation of which, all that are in him are justified before God: And *this Communion* that Believers have with Christ in his Benefits thro' the Faith of the Operation of God, is in a lively manner held out, and signified

nified to them in their Baptism, wherein they are said to be both *buried and risen together with him*; Col. 2. 12. The Immersion of the Body into the Water bearing an Analogy to his Burial, as the raising of it again out of the Water doth to his Resurrection. This the Apostle intends, that even their Baptism upon their first receiving, and profession of the Christian Religion, did teach and oblige them to live upon Christ alone, and to joyn no other thing with him in the Foundation of their Hope.

These things being so, Circumcision was of Use no longer, neither had Christians any Concernment in it; for having reached the Accomplishment of its utmost End in Jesus Christ, it expired in Course, and vanished away with the whole Frame of the *Mosaical* Oeconomy; And so far is the Apostle from intimating that Baptism came in the room of Circumcision, that he discourages of them, as appertaining to *two Covenants* so *differenced* one from the other, and in *their compleat Ministration opposed* the one to the other, as that they could by no means (in this last respect) consist together.

§. 7. In the next place; It is to be noted,

That there was "*A typical Representation of the future State of the Church (viz. in the days of the Gospel) in the present Transactions of God with Abraham, and the State of his Family thereupon.*" The Explication of all Particulars

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particulars belonging hereunto, would require an enlargement of this Discourse beyond its intended Bounds; And therefore, to our present Purpose, I shall only point at the Heads of those things which the Apostle sets before us in *Gal. 4.* from *ver 21,* to the end of the *Chapter.*

Upon the reading of this Context, you will observe that the Allegory insisted on by the Apostle is grounded upon this historical Verity,

1. That *Abraham* had a twofold Seed; the one proceeding from him according to the ordinary Course, and by the Strength of Nature, the other brought forth by virtue of a Promise; the one was *Ishmael* by *Hagar*, a Bond-woman, the other *Isaac* by *Sarah* a Free-woman.

2. The Bond-woman and her Son, had the Precedence, in time of Conception and Birth, to the Free-woman and her Son.

3. In process of time the Son of the Bond-woman who was *born after the Flesh*, persecutes the son of the Free-woman who was *born after the Spirit*; i. e. in the virtue of the Promise; And thereupon the Bond-woman and her Son are cast out of the Family, and *Isaac* remains there as the only Heir of his Father's Blessing.

That these things were disposed of God with a typical Respect to Gospel-times, the Apostle affirms, and thus appliys them:

Hagar was a Type of *mount Sinai*, and the Legal Covenant there established; and *Ishmael* was a Type of the carnal Seed of *Abraham*, as under
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that Covenant: *Sarah* was a Type of the *New-Jerusalem*, or of the Gospel-Church founded on the Covenant of Grace; And *Isaac*, a Type of the true Members of that Church, who are *born of the Spirit*; being converted by the power of the Holy Ghost, for the fulfilling of the Promise of the Father, unto Jesus Christ the Mediator: And, the *Ejection* of *Hagar* and *Ishmael* was to foretew the *Abrogation* of the *Sinai-Covenant*, and *dissolving* of the Jewish Church-state; that so the Inheritance of spiritual Blessings might be clearly devolved upon the Children of God by Faith in Jesus Christ.

There are many other things worthy to be observed, which it is not my present Work to insist upon; this general View which hath been taken of the Context being sufficient to prepare our way to the following Observations.

§. 8. First, The Apostle who in *Gal. 3. 8, & 17.* calleth the Promise recorded in *Gen. 12.* the *Gospel preached to Abraham*; and the *Covenant confirmed of God in Christ*: doth here expressly call that Covenant-Transaction unto which Circumcision belonged, and wherein the Right and Priviledg of the natural Seed of *Abraham* was stated, the *Law*; and their desire of being under it he condemns, as proceeding from their Folly and Ignorance: *Gal. 4. 21.*

2. Notwithstanding all the Priviledges of *Israel* after the *Flesh*, they remained in a state of Bond-

age under the Law: And their being Parties in the *Sinai* Covenant, and in the Covenant of Circumcision, and Children of the earthly *Jerusalem* (or Members of that Church whose State was founded on the Covenants before mentioned) and so interested in all the Worship there to be performed, (all this I say) could no more give them Interest in, and Right to, the spiritual Blessings of *Abraham*, then *Ishmael's* carnal Descent from him, could either inright himself or his Seed, in the Covenant of Peculiarity made with *Israel*, and the outward Blessings thereof: For altho' the Seed of *Abraham* by *Isaac* were under the Dispensation of those Blessings that were the shadow, and Type of the good things of the Gospel; yet their *Birth-right*, and proper Claim in the Interest of their Covenant, did fall as far short of Gospel-blessings, as *Ishmael's* did of their Priviledges; For as *Ishmael* was, in a *literal* Sence, born after the Flesh and the Son of a Bond-woman, so were they *mystically*; and as *Ishmael* did persecute *Isaac*, so they (being putt up with a vain Confidence in their carnal Priviledg, and Prerogative) did not only reject the Gospel themselves, but also persecuted the Children of the New *Jerusalem*; And therefore as he was cast out of *Abraham's* Family, and excluded from any part in the Inheritance of the Son of Promise, so must they be excluded from the Kingdom of God, and the Inheritance of the Blessings thereof.

Thus did God, in the very beginning of the Covenant-state of *Israel* after the Flesh, in this Type set before their Eyes *the Imperfection thereof*, and the sad End they would bring themselves to, by a resting in it, and overweening of it.

3. Howbeit, The Covenant of Peculiarity made with *Israel*, and the Dispensation that God brought them under pursuant to the Ends thereof, was typical of the Gospel-Covenant and the State of things therein. In *Isaac* we have a Type of the Children of God by Faith; and as he (in his Seed) was the Heir of *Canaan*, so are they Heirs of Heaven; And as he was persecuted by *Ishmael*, so must they expect Trouble in the World, and look to be maligned by all carnal and Pharisaical Spirits, that seek to establish their own Righteousnesses, and refuse to submit to the righteousness of God; In a word, the People, their Worship, and Inheritance, was all typical; And yet, as *Abraham's* spiritual Seed may behold the shadow of their own State and Priviledg, in the

Pars quaedam terrena Civitatis, Imago celestis Civitatis efficta est, non se significando, sed alteram, & idem serviens. Neque enim propter seipsam, sed

propter aliam significandam est instituta, & precedente alia significatione, & ipsa praefigurans, praefigurata est: Namq; Agar ancilla Sara, ejusq; Filius, Imago quaedam hujus Imaginis fuit. August. de Civita. Dei, Lib. 15. Cap. 2.

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the Children of Promise, both themselves, their State, and End, *was figured in the Son of the Bond-woman and his Rejection.*

Now from hence we may infer, that;

1. The carnal Seed of Believers, can obtain no greater Priviledg by the *Covenant of Circumcision*, than the Seed of *Abraham* by *Isaac* had; and their Priviledg reached not to an Interest in Gospel-Blessings, or in the New Covenant, unless they obtained that Right for themselves by believing; otherwise they had no more *Right in them*, by their natural Descent from *Abraham*, than *Ishmael* had in the Blessings of their Covenant of Peculiarity; And their Interest in typical Priviledges, must needs cease, and vanish away, when the things typified were exhibited.

2. The State of *Israel* after the *Flesh* being typical; The *Israel of God* among them, were taught to look above, and beyond their external Priviledges, unto those things that were shadowed by them, as set before their Faith in the Promises of Grace by Christ; and so to live upon the Grace of that Covenant, which their outward State, and Covenant of Peculiarity was subservient to; And unto them, all these things had a *spiritual, and evangelical Use*; which being their principal End and Intent, a fair Occasion is ministered for *such an Intermixture* of the Promises of *Typical*, with those of *real Blessings*, as we have

now had under Consideration; Because the Covenant of Grace, and that of Circumcision have their *mutual Respect*, as the *Type to its Antitype*.

§. 9. And these things are not only necessary to the right Understanding of those divine Transactions with *Abraham* which we have been treating of; but also are of Use for the opening, and right Application of very many Prophecies, and Promises of the Old Testament; and for the avoiding of those stumbling Blocks (and others like unto them) which the blind Jews have fallen, and do fall upon to this day.

The Phrasology of the Old Testament will hardly be understood in divers Places, without due regard to many of those things that we have been treating of: *viz.*

1. That during the time of the Law, the true Church was impaled within the Bounds of the Common-wealth of *Israel*; which in its *intire Body* was a *typical Church*.

2. That the Children of God after the Spirit (tho' as Children under Age, they were subject to the Pædagogy of the Law, yet) as to their spiritual and eternal State, did walk before God, and found Acceptance with him, upon Terms of the Covenant of Grace.

3. That the whole Oeconomy this People were under, did in its typical respect, subserve the Ends of the Covenant of Grace to the Elect, who were the true and spiritual Worshipers of God; And the

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the greatest, and only visible Number of them, was to be preserved among that People, until the Gospel Church-state should take place.

4. But yet, this spiritual Relation to God according to the Terms of the New-Covenant which the truly Godly then had, was not so clearly held forth under the Old Testament as it is in the times of the New, and by the Dispensation of the Gospel: But the things relating thereto, were very much wrapt up in dark Shadows, and Figures. And therefore,

Many times the things, and People typified, are spoken of in propheticall Scriptures, under the names of those Things, and that People, which were the Types of them; And the Promise of the choicest Gospel- blessings, and most glorious State (with respect to spiritual Glory) of the New-Testament Church, are given forth to *Israel of old* in those Terms that did *suit the present State* of things; and are peculiarly directed unto them, and their Seed; but these Promises being given to them as considered in their Relation to God, as his only visible Church, and Covenant-people, are not to be applied to *Israel* after the Flesh, as such, but had their Accomplishment in the Church when *Israel* was rejected, and the Gentiles called to inherit the Blessing of *Abraham*; Howbeit they being directly given out to *Israel* and *Jacob*, as the only true Church then in being, and a People in whom the Church, which should be, was typified; it was but meet and necessary

(especially considering that the spiritual Glory of the Gospel, and the calling of the Gentiles, was a Mystery not to be unfolded in those times, but kept under a Veil) that the Terms made use of in those Prophecies and Promises, should be accommodated unto that *Oeconomy* under which the Church then was; which yet must be interpreted in a Sence agreeable to *those times, and that Dispensation*, in which they were to have their full Accomplishment. And therefore seeing the Church was then continued in a Line of natural Descent from *Abraham*, being propagated by Generation as long as the Old Covenant state thereof remained unshaken, the Promises made to the Church respecting her future Glory, Peace, and Blessedness in the days of the *Messiah*, are given forth as to the *Seed and Offspring* of the Church then in Being; tho' they did really belong to, and were intended for, (not a carnal Offspring, but) those that God should continue to own as his Covenant-People and Church; even such as should walk in the steps of *Abraham's* Faith, the Gentiles, as well as Jews.

§. 10. All that now remains to be done before I draw to a Period of this Discourse, is to consider how far *the mutual Respect of the Promises made to Abraham* may guide us towards a right understanding, how *Circumcision* became unto *Abraham*, a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith, &c. which the Apostle affirms it to have bin, *Rom. 4. 11.*

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And in opening that Text, the grand Objection against that Notion of the Covenant of Circumcision which I have insisted on, will be obviated. In order herunto, I shall first set down the Text, and give you a brief Exposition of it; then shew you wherein it was verified: and offer something for the strengthening and Eviction of the Sence given.

The words of the Text are;

And he received the Sign of Circumcision, a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith which he had being yet uncircumcised; that he might be the Father of all them that believe, tho' they be not circumcised, that Righteousness may be imputed unto them also.

In the Verses foregoing the Apostle is discoursing of the time wherein Abraham's Faith was imputed to him for Righteousness, and proves from thence the equal Right of the uncircumcised Gentile (if a Believer) with the circumcised Jew, in the blessings of the Gospel, by means of a spiritual Relation to Abraham, inasmuch as his Faith was reckoned to him for Righteousness, not in Circumcision, but in Uncircumcision;

And he received the Sign of Circumcision; i.e. Circumcision which was a Sign; It is genitive Speciei; as when we read the City of Jerusalem; for the City Jerusalem; and the like; Some Greek Copies do here read ΠΕΡΙΤΟΜΗ. This belongs to the general use, nature, and end of Circumcision; it was a Sign; but moreover, unto Abraham it was;

— *A Seal of the Righteousness of the Faith, which he had being yet uncircumcised*; A Seal is for Confirmation, and Assurance; and in this notion of a Seal there may be some respect to that visible Mark and Character which remained in the Flesh of him that was circumcised; for we read not that any other Ordinance (no not Baptism) is so called in Scripture; but in the New Testament the sealing of Believers is attributed to the Holy Ghost.

— *Of the Righteousness of the Faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised*; that is, of his being Righteous before God thro' believing; which Faith he had, and which Righteousness was imputed to him (the Relative may agree with either Antecedent) while he was uncircumcised: There are some Words supplied by the Translators to fill up the sense in our English Phrase, which the learned Dr. Lightfoot in his *Hor. Hebraic. on Cor. 7. 19.* fills up by another Supply that gives somewhat a differing sense of the Text, which I refer the Reader to, as not unworthy his Consideration; but shall here rest satisfied with that sense which our Translation affords us. It follows,

— *That he might be the Father of all that believe in Uncircumcision*: the sense is, that he might be manifested to be (things are in Scripture oftentimes said to be, when they are by any solemn Act declared, or confirmed) the Father of all believing Gentiles, tho' they be not circumcised; inasmuch as they also are a part of that spiritual
Seed

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Seed promised to him in Uncircumcision.

— *That Righteousness might be imputed to them also*: take it as before, that it might be made manifest, and confirmed, that Righteousness is, and shall be imputed to them also: See ver. 23, 24.

§. 11. Having given this brief Explication of the Terms used in the Text, the next thing to be enquired is; wherein are the Contents of it verified? or how, or in what respect, was Circumcision a Seal of the Righteousness of the Faith which *Abraham* had being yet uncircumcised?

For answer to this Enquiry; observe,

1. That in the Prologue to this Covenant of Circumcision *Gen. 17.* God did expressly renew, and confirm to *Abraham*, the great Promise of the Covenant of Grace, concerning the justifying of the Gentiles by Faith in Christ, which Blessing they should receive in the Relation of Children to *Abraham*, and so he should become the Father of many Nations; And the Covenant of Circumcision being added to former Transactions wherein God had confirmed his Covenant in Christ with *Abraham*; the use of Circumcision (as to him) was not limited to that Covenant of Peculiarity unto which it did immediately belong, but must necessarily reach farther, and include a Confirmation of all preceding Transactions, & the Promises given in them;
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especially of that which was repeated, immediately before the Institution thereof. The Promises of God to *Abraham* (tho' of a different Nature) did not interfere one with another; but the latter still implied a Confirmation and Ratification of the former; This Covenant therefore did not supplant, but confirm the Truth of the Gospel before preached to *Abraham*, it was not added to disannul the Promise, but to serve the Ends thereof; and therefore Circumcision did not only seal to *Abraham* the Promises of typical Blessings now given, but also was a Seal of the Righteousness of the Faith which he had being yet uncircumcised, that he might be the Father of all that believe in *Uncircumcision*.

2. It was so (tho' more indirectly) on this account also:

Abraham's Faith (as we have seen before) was much concerned in the Promise of *Isaac's* Birth, and the separating of his Seed from other Nations for the bringing forth of the *Messiah*; and he knew well that the Covenant of Circumcision was made with him in pursuance of the great Promises before given; and so the Seal of this Covenant became unto him, a Seal of the Righteousness of the Faith which he had before, and confirmed him in his paternal Relation to Believers in all Nations, which was an Honour before conferred on him. It is the Discovery of the *Subserviency* of Circumcision, as received by *Abraham*, to the great End and Design of the Cove-

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Covenant of Grace (which was confirmed to *Abraham* before he was circumcised) that the Apostle particularly aims at in this Place ; and he proves that the Covenant of Circumcision is so far from excluding the Gentiles from inheriting the Blessing of *Abraham* by Faith ; as that it was, to him an Assurance and Seal of the Promise of so great a Priviledg to them ; as also of his own Justification thro' Faith, while uncircumcised.

And moreover ; The Covenant of Circumcision not being so compleat in it self, as to bring the Church unto that Perfection which in the eternal Counsels of God's Sovereign Grace was intended ; and therefore not capable to make any thing perfect by it self ; must needs be established as typical, and subservient to the Covenant of Grace, in a temporary Dispensation that should usher in, and then give place to the Gospel, in the fulness of Time ; and in respect of this Disposition of the Covenant now made, the Sign by which it was confirmed, became ultimately and in its typical respect, a Seal of the Righteousness of the Faith which *Abraham* had before.

§. 12. It is no ways difficult to conceive, that Circumcision might have a different Respect, according to the differing Circumstances and Capacity of its Subject ; Yea that it had so, in another Instance hath been already proved. It was a Seal of the Inheritance of *Canaan* to the Children of *Israel*, and did ensure the Promise thereof to them
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and their Seed ; But it gave their Bond-servants no such Right or Claim ; Even so, it was to *Abraham a Seal of the Righteousness of the Faith which he had*, &c. but this arose from the peculiar, and extraordinary Circumstances, and Capacity that he was in ; for it is not possible to conceive that Circumcision should be *a Seal of the Righteousness of the Faith which he had while uncircumcised, that he might be the Father of all that believe in Uncircumcision*, to one that never had Faith, either before or after his Circumcision, nor ever had, or should have, the Relation of a Father to all Believers, as *Abraham* had.

Now that the Apostle speaks of Circumcision here with respect to the peculiar Circumstances, and Capacity of *Abraham* who received it, is evident from the scope of his Discourse in the Context ; in which the Argument that he manageth, is to prove that neither could Circumcision give to any an Interest in that Grace, that justifies a Sinner before God, nor the want of it hinder any from obtaining that Interest, in the way, and upon the Terms of the Gospel ; seeing *Abraham* himself obtained it not by his carnal Prerogative, but was justified before he was circumcised ; And the whole stress of his Argument, lies upon the Supposition of *Abraham's* being a Believer, and justified by his Faith, before he received Circumcision ; Remove this, and his Discourse concludes nothing of what he intends ; And hence he inters, that *Abraham* received Circumcision so, as that it
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was to him, *a Seal* (not simply, of the Righteousness of Faith, or of the New-Covenant, but) *of the Righteousness of the Faith which he had being yet uncircumcised* ; as also of his *paternal Relation* to all Believers tho' they be not circumcised ; for so it follows, *that he might be the Father of all them that believe* ; And it is equally absurd to say that Circumcision was a Seal unto all its Subjects, of the Righteousness of Faith which they had while uncircumcised, as to affirm that it was the Seal of a paternal Relation to all Believers, unto every one that received it : Both these must necessarily be resolved into the peculiar Circumstances of *Abraham*, the particular Relation he had in the Covenants made with him, and the order of their Disposition ; and not into the nature of Circumcision considered simply, and in it self.

And moreover it is observable, That immediately after, in the continuance of his Discourse in *Rom. 4.* the Apostle refers Circumcision to the Law, in contradistinction from the Gospel ; for when he hath told us that *the circumcised Jew* could not obtain *the Blessing* of a spiritual Relation to *Abraham* by virtue of his Circumcision, unless he did walk in the steps of *Abraham's Faith, which he had while uncircumcised*, ver. 12. he assigns this as the reason of it in the 13th Verse ; *For the Promise that he should be the Heir of the World, was not to Abraham or to his Seed, thro' the Law, but through the Righteousness of Faith.* And I cannot see how the Conclusion which the Apostle makes

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concerning the Inefficacy of Circumcision, is enforced by this Reason, if Circumcision immediately and in its own Nature had not belonged to the Law; but, to the *Righteousness of Faith, or Covenant of Grace, as an ordinary Seal thereof.*

Again; The Interpretation made of this Text is farther strengthened by the conference of other Places in the New-Testament, where we find that Circumcision is stiled an *unsupportable Yoke*, Act. 5. 10. and is said to lay Men under an *Obligation to keep the whole Law*; Gal. 5. 3. and the compleat Dispensation of Grace in the Gospel according to the New-Covenant, is constantly insisted on as that which renders it utterly useless to the Gospel-Church, and manifests the Inconsistency of retaining the Practise thereof, with the Liberty of their present State: "See for Instance the *Epistle to the Galatians*, and in Chap. 5. 13. the Apostle tells them if he did yet *preach Circumcision, then was the Offence of the Cross ceased*; and he might have lived free from the Persecutions he now suffered from the unbelieving Jews: It was the Apostles preaching Christ, so as therein to assert the shaking and removing of that Old Covenant, unto which Circumcision did belong, and by which the Jews held the Right of their peculiar Priviledges (tho' now in Truth, the Continuance of those could no longer have been a real Priviledg to them) that was the ground of the Controversie betwixt them, and of their
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unreasonable Opposition to him : For if the Controversie had been about *the Mode of administering* the same Covenant, and the *Change only* of an *external Rite*, by bringing *Baptism* into the place of *Circumcision*, to serve for the same Use and End now, as that had done before, the heat of their Contests might soon have been allayed ; especially considering the latter is far less painful and dangerous than the former ; But he will certainly find himself engaged in a very difficult Task, that shall seriously endeavour to reconcile the Apostles discourses of Circumcision, with such a Notion of it : Circumcision was an Ordinance of the Old Covenant, and appertained to the Law, and therefore did directly bind its Subjects to a legal Obedience ; but Baptism is an Ordinance of the Gospel, and (besides other excellent, and most comfortable Uses), directly obligeth its Subjects to Gospel-Obedience ; And therefore is rather, in this respect opposed to, than substituted in the place of Circumcision : And certainly it is more safe to interpret *one Text* according to the *general Current* of Scripture, and in a full *Harmony* therewith, than to force such a sense upon many *Texts*, which in no wise they will admit, to bring them into a Compliance with that *Notion of one* which our minds are prepossessed with ; And it is plain that the *Notion* I have insisted on, fully agrees with other places where Circumcision is discoursed of according to its immediate and direct use in the old Covenant :

nant: For there can be no Contradiction in ascribing a different, and seemingly opposite, Use and End, to the same thing, if it be done in a different Respect: What Circumcision was *directly and in its immediate Use*, is one thing; and what it was *as subordinate to a better Covenant, and Promise*, that had Precedency to it, is another; And it is easie to conceive, that it might be that *to the Father of the faithful, in its extraordinary Institution*, that it could not be *to the Children of the Flesh, or carnal Seed, in its ordinary Use*.

To conclude, if Circumcision and Baptism have the same Use, and are Seals of the same Covenant, I can hardly imagine how the Application of both to the same Subjects should at any time be proper; and yet we find those that were circumcised in their Infancy, were also baptized upon the Profession of Faith and Repentance, and that, *before Circumcision was abrogated*; yea according to the Opinion that hath been argued against, The Jews that believed before Christ had suffered, were at the same time under a Command both of circumcising and baptizing their Infant-Seed. But if the Principles that this Discourse is built upon, be well proved by Scripture, as I take them to be, there must be allowed a vast Disparity, betwixt Circumcision and Baptism: *The Old Covenant, is not the New*, nor that which is *abolished*, the same with that which *remains*; and till these become one, Baptism and Circumcision will never be found *so far one*, as that the

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Law for applying *this*, should be a *sufficient Warrant* for the Administration of *that*, unto Infants.

We have now past through the Covenant-Transactions of God with *Abraham*; after which we find no signal Alteration in the state of the Church, by any New Transactions, until the Law was given upon Mount *Sinai*. And therefore I shall here put a Period to my present Discourse, it being intended only, of the Covenants that God made with Men before the Law.

F I N I S.